

CORNELLI



JOHANNA SPYRI

*Historical
Children's Books*

SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY







Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/cornelli0000joha_d0y5

CORNELLI



DODLEY & COWE 27

EVERY MORNING THE LITTLE TROOP OF FOUR CHILDREN
WENT DOWN THE STREET



CORNELLI

BY

JOHANNA SPYRI

(Author of "Heidi" & "Gritli's Children.")



Translated by
LOUISE BROOKS

GROSSET & DUNLAP, Publishers
NEW YORK



Copyright, 1927
By THOMAS Y. CROWELL COMPANY

Printed in the United States of America

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH	9
II	ON THE TOP FLOOR	33
III	NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH	60
IV	SOMETHING UNDESIRABLE HAPPENS	88
V	AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH	119
VI	A NEW FRIENDSHIP	142
VII	A NEW SORROW	174
VIII	A MOTHER	199
IX	A GREAT CHANGE	231
X	NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH	260

CHAPTER I

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

THE young beech-trees were turning green again beside the roaring Illerbach. A blustering south wind shook their light tops to and fro and let the bright green now glimmer in the sunshine, then quickly become obscured by the dark shadows, for the mighty wind was driving great flying clouds every moment across the sun. Forced first away from the wind, then towards it, a little girl with bright red cheeks and flying hair, her eyes full of fire and the joy of life, was racing through the woods. The round hat belonging on the child's head was hanging from her arm, and was swinging back and forth so violently in the swift chase that any moment it was in danger of being torn from the ribbon and blown into the distance. Now the whistling wind retreated somewhat, and under the trees it be-

CORNELLI

came more quiet. The little girl stopped running and began to sing:

Snow on the meadow
And snow everywhere,
Snow above me, snow below me —
For more I don't care!
Hurrah, Hurrah!
For more I don't care!

Oh, sun high in heaven,
Cuckoo in the trees,
Buttercups by the torrent —
Come soon, won't you please!
Hurrah, Hurrah!
Come soon, won't you please!

His lays the finch warbles,
Round the roof swallows dart:
I, too, fly and keep singing,
Myriad joys fill my heart!
Hurrah, Hurrah!
Myriad joys fill my heart!

The child sang with such a strong voice that it echoed far away through the woods and all the birds became so excited that each tried to out-

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

warble the other. The child laughed aloud and sang again with all her might:

Hurrah, Hurrah!
Oh come, won't you please!

and from every branch sounded every sort of rival tones.

On the edge of the wood stood the old beech-tree, with tall, sturdy trunk, in the far-reaching shade of which the child had often found coolness on hot days. Now she had reached the tree. For a while she looked up at the branches waving to and fro. There where the wind had more free space it blew with great force, and its shaking and roaring up in the top must have caused the child a strange impulse to give expression to her energy. Suddenly she rushed towards the contrary blowing wind and struggled and resisted and ran against the force. Then she abruptly turned around. Driven by the wind she dashed down the steep edge of the meadow to the path leading to a narrow valley. She did

CORNELLI

not stop running until hurrying towards the roaring brook she reached a little wooden house, overlooking the water from a green slope. A narrow flight of steps led from outside to the entrance door. The open gallery in front of the door bore a wide railing, on which wonderful carnations were standing and scattering their fragrance afar.

The wild little girl must have been well known here. In three high jumps, leaping over two steps at a bound, she reached the top.

“Martha! Martha!” she called through the open door into the house. “Come out! Have you really noticed how jolly the wind is to-day?”

An old woman with gray hair and a cap securely tied over it came out. She was dressed with the utmost simplicity but so neat and trim, that one might have thought she sat all day long in her chair in order not to disturb her fresh attire, if her overworked hands had not told another story.

“Oh, you just ought to know how lovely the

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

wind blows up in the woods and on the hill, Martha!" called the child to the woman as she came out. "It blows so terribly that you have to struggle with all your might, if you don't want to fly away like the birds and then be blown down the whole mountain, so that you don't know how and can hardly stand on the ground any longer. You ought to know how jolly it is outside."

"I would rather not know," said Martha, shaking the child's hand in welcome. "I think you are a little bit disordered in the wind, Cornelli. Come, let us make you tidy again."

Her thick black hair was completely tangled; what grew on the left side of her head lay towards the right, and from the right side it was all thrown to the left. Her apron no longer hung in front, but down from one side. The string was torn away from her little dress and dragged along twigs of thorns and leaves from the woods, which had woven themselves into it. Martha first put her hair in order, straightened her apron, and then brought out her needle

CORNELLI

and thread and sewed the torn string firmly to her dress.

“Stop, Martha, stop!” Cornelli suddenly screamed aloud and pulled her dress away. “You have pricked your finger badly. It is half covered with needle-pricks. I can see it very well now.”

“That is no matter, just give me your dress,” replied Martha, continuing her work. “It is nothing at all to prick my finger on such a thing as your little dress. You see it comes from the work on the heavy shirts which I make for the farmers and the workmen in the iron-works. Then I prick myself quite differently. On them I often cut little pieces away from my finger.”

“You oughtn’t to do it, Martha; they ought to make their shirts themselves, and prick their own fingers,” said Cornelli, indignant.

“No, no, Cornelli,” protested the old woman, “you see I am glad and thankful to have the work and so to be able to earn my daily bread without anxiety. I have only to be thankful for

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

the great good the dear Lord sends me and above all because I am still able to work and have my strength."

Cornelli looked carefully around the modestly furnished but very neatly kept little room.

"He really hasn't sent you so much, it is only so well taken care of and that you do yourself," remarked the child.

"So I have to thank the dear Lord for that too, that I am able to do that," replied Martha. "You see, Cornelli, if the dear Lord did not give me good health to be able to do what I want to, who would do it for me as I like to have it done? And what a great gift it is to be able to step out here every morning in the beautiful sunshine, bring out my carnations and be able to thank my Lord gladly that I have another beautiful day before me to enjoy. Oh, how many poor people there are who have to wake to sorrow and tears, who have to spend the day on a bed of pain and have care and trouble besides. You see, Cornelli, how much I have to thank the

CORNELLI

dear Lord for, and how glad I can be that even if I hurt my finger I do not have to stop! There, now you are as you ought to be. I believe the bell is ringing for the workmen to stop work, and that is really time for the master's supper, so you must run along home quickly."

Martha knew very well why she was careful to send her little friend on her way home; only too often the time had been entirely forgotten and her father had been obliged to send for her. Then Cornelli ran down the little slope along by the roaring brook to the big building in which all day long was heard the crackling of fire and crashing and hammering, which were only partially drowned by the loud roaring of the Illerbach. This was the workshop of the great iron foundry, well known in all the country round, for most of the people in the neighborhood found work there.

Cornelli glanced towards the big doors; they were already closed. Then she flew past in long leaps to the single house standing rather high

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

above the water and surrounded on three sides by gardens rich in flowers. It was the residence of the proprietor of the iron-works. Cornelli darted across the open space, which lay on the farther side of the house, threw her hat into a corner and went into the living-room. There at the table sat her father, holding a big paper in front of him; he did not look up. Cornelli quickly ate the soup which she found in her plate, and then since her father did not stir behind his paper, she helped herself to everything else standing on the table. Then her father looked up. Cornelli was nibbling an apple.

“Aha, you have outstripped me; I have not gone so far,” he said, “but you must not come to the table so late; it is not proper even if you finish sooner than I do. Now if you have finished, carry this letter out to the post-office. There is something in it that concerns you, you will be delighted. This evening I will tell you about it; now I must go away at once.”

Cornelli took the letter which her father

CORNELLI

handed her, gathered up the pieces of her apple on the plate and ran out. Then she went bounding along by the roaring Iller to where the narrow valley path led into the wide highway. Here stood the public hotel which was post-office as well. The comfortable landlady was standing in the open doorway and smiled kindly at the child.

“Where are you going? Where are you going in such a hurry?” she asked.

“Only to you,” answered Cornelli, a little out of breath. “I must mail a letter.”

“Well, well, give it to me. We will take good care of it,” said the woman, holding the child’s hand fast which she had offered her in greeting. “You are very well, Cornelli, aren’t you? You know nothing about trouble.”

The child shook her head.

“Yes, I believe it; why should you? It does one good to look at your merry eyes. Come and see me oftener. It makes me happy to see such a joyful child.”

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

Cornelli said she would gladly come again if she would like to have her, for the woman always spoke to her in such a friendly way. Then she left her and as she ran bounding along the landlady watched her with satisfaction and said half aloud: "All right, only always be happy. Nothing could be better."

The contents of the letter, which Cornelli had just given up and which the landlady prepared to forward, ran thus:

"Illerbach, April 28, 18—.

"DEAR COUSIN:

"My journey to Vienna, which I have been postponing for a year past, must be undertaken shortly. I am now making the request that you will come and spend the Summer here, in order to preside over my house. I naturally place the greatest value on your educational influence on my child, who, poor thing, has grown up till now without any real training. Mine, my housekeeper, does her best, and good Esther, manager of the kitchen, helps me as much as she can. Old Martha, my blessed wife's nurse,

CORNELLI

has really done the best for the child's welfare, but I cannot call it true education. I really have myself to blame in the matter; I do not at all understand how to bring up a little girl. Besides my business demands so much of me that I hardly see the child. I know no greater misfortune for a child than the loss of a mother, and such a mother as my Cornelia was, and the poor child has already been without her for three years! Bring a good friend with you, so that you will not feel too lonely, and let your arrival soon delight

“Your cousin,

“FRIEDRICH HELLMUT.”

That same evening when Director Hellmut was sitting at the table again with his daughter, Cornelli, he told her he hoped his cousin, Fräulein Kitti Dorner, would come to Illerbach and stay until he returned from his journey to Vienna. Cornelli should be well pleased at this prospect.

After a few days came the cousin's reply. It ran thus:

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

“B——, May 4, 18—.

“DEAR COUSIN:

“As a favor to you, I will arrange it so that I can spend the Summer in your house. My friend, Fräulein Grideelen, will come with me. To stay quite alone in your house would be somewhat monotonous as you yourself feel. You need have no further anxiety about the bringing up of your child. There is no time to be lost. One must not think that these little beings need merely the best strength for their care; that is at first necessary if they can be influenced intellectually. Such little creatures only vegetate and your Mine is quite the right person to nourish and amuse her. Esther, too, who is so reliable, has helped to give the necessary care to the child. Later on something quite different will be required for her education. The time may have come now, when the child really needs the right educational influence. We shall come the last week of this month. I could not well leave before.

“With best regards,

“Your cousin,

“KITTI DORNER.”

CORNELLI

“The cousin is coming, now be happy, Cornelli,” said her father, after he had read the letter at the supper table, “and another lady is coming with her. Now a new and delightful life is to begin for you.”

Cornelli, who had known nothing until now about this relative of her father’s, did not feel any special joy over this news. She did not know what pleasure there would be from this visit. She saw in it only a change in the house, which she did not desire. She preferred that everything should remain just as it was; anything different did not appeal to her. The child saw her father rarely except at meal-time; the rest of the time he spent over at his place of business and in the extensive workshops. But this was no reason for Cornelli to feel lonely or neglected. She always had so much to look forward to, that she had not a moment when she did not know what to do. On the contrary, the free time between school hours was always too short and the afternoon had exactly half as much

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

time for Cornelli to accomplish all the roaming which she wanted to undertake then. Her father had left the room and Cornelli followed after him in order to go out, as usual, as soon as her father had left the house.

Vigorous Esther was just coming with her big vegetable basket on her arm from the garden; she had taken forethought for the following day. “Don’t go out again, Cornelli, a thunder-storm is coming; it is very dark over the mountain.”

“Oh, I must go to Martha’s. I must tell her something to-day,” replied Cornelli quickly. “The storm won’t come so soon.”

“Oh, it won’t come for a long time,” called Mine who had heard the warning from the open door and now stepped out. “Go ahead, Cornelli, there won’t be any thunder-storm yet. You will get to Martha’s all right, only run along.”

The child darted away. Esther shrugged her shoulders and went silently past Mine. It always happened like this and in every case when

CORNELLI

Cornelli had something in mind. If Mine thought it ought not to be done, Esther would surely come along and say nothing was easier than to carry out her plan, and if she thought Cornelli ought to refrain from something Mine would immediately help her to undertake it. This happened because each of them wanted to be the favorite and have the child's partiality.

Cornelli came rushing up the steps to Martha's little house and into the living-room. "Just think, Martha, two entirely new persons are coming to our house, two ladies from the city, and Papa says I shall enjoy them very much, but I am not a bit delighted for I don't know them. Would you be delighted, Martha, if two new people came to you?"

Cornelli had to draw a long breath, she had spoken so fast, after the swift run had taken away her breath.

"Sit down by me a little while, Cornelli," said the old woman calmly. "You must first get your breath. Surely somebody your Papa likes

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

is coming, if he says you will be delighted, and you surely will be when you know them."

"Yes, perhaps, but what are you writing, Martha? I have never seen you writing before," said the child gaily, for her thoughts had suddenly taken another turn.

"Yes, it is hard enough for me," replied Martha. "You could do it much better than I can, it is so long since I wrote anything like this."

"Give it to me, Martha, I will soon write it for you, only tell me what," and Cornelli seized the pen willingly and dipped it to the bottom of the little ink-stand.

"I will tell you and then you can write it as you like; you will do it better than I," said Martha relieved, for she had already been sitting some time with the pen in her hand before the paper and had not been able to make a beginning. "You see, Cornelli, I have done so well with the work lately, that I was able to accomplish something I have had in mind for a long time; I have been able to buy a bed. A table

CORNELLI

and two chairs and an old chest I already had and now I have put them all in my little room upstairs. You must look at it. Now I could take some one to board for the Summer. You know sometimes invalid ladies or delicate children come from the city to the country, and I could take good care of them. I am always at home and could do my work besides. I wanted to put all this on the paper, but I couldn't express how it ought to begin."

"I will write it plainly so that some one can come immediately," said Cornelli eagerly, "but first let us look at the room. I am so very curious to see how it is."

Martha was ready at once. She went first up the narrow stairs and opened the door to the little room.

"Oh, how pretty! Oh, how pretty!" exclaimed Cornelli, and ran full of admiration from one corner to the other. Martha had really furnished her little room so attractively that one could not help finding pleasure in it. She

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

had made curtains from some fine white material with little blue flowers on it and hung them at the two windows, which looked very pretty. An old wooden chest she had turned up on end and trimmed with the same flowered material; it now was standing in the corner as a dainty wash-stand. The two ancient chairs also wore the bright-flowered covering and the bed in the corner had the same gay appearance, for it too was dressed up with the flowered stuff.

“Oh, how lovely it is!” exclaimed Cornelli again and again. “How could you do it, Martha? Did you suddenly have such a terrible lot of money?”

“Oh no, oh no, not so much, but just enough for my bed and a piece of material, which I got cheap because it was a remnant. But really it doesn’t look so bad. Do you think any one would like to stay in it?” Martha looked questioningly and critically at each single object, which she had carefully transformed according to its needs.

CORNELLI

“Yes really, I am perfectly sure of it; just believe it, Martha,” asserted Cornelli. “I would come at once and be awfully willing to, if I didn’t live at home. Now I will write at once; I know quite well what.” Then Cornelli ran down the stairs, dipped the pen again and began with great eagerness to write the advertisement.

“Don’t forget to say it is in the country and what we call it, so that they can find me,” reminded Martha prudently, for it occurred to her that it must be a very difficult task for Cornelli to get everything into the advertisement.

“To be sure, I must say that too,” remarked Cornelli and wrote the end. “There, now I will read it over to you, Martha, then you can see if I have mentioned everything.”

The child read: “If any one would like a nice room, it can be had at Martha Wolff’s. She would give excellent care to an invalid lady or delicate child. It is very beautifully furnished and has quite new white and blue covers on everything. It is in the country, in Illerbach,

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

on the Illerbach, not far from the great iron-works."

Martha was much pleased. "You have said it all so clearly that it can be easily understood," she said. "I couldn't have said it so at all. It is almost like boasting. If I only knew now where I ought to send the paper. I really don't exactly know what address I ought to put on it."

"I know very well what you ought to do," said Cornelli. "I will take the paper quickly to the post-office. When I carry a letter there people often come and say to the landlord: 'That must go in the paper.' Then he takes it and says: 'I will take care of it.' So I will do exactly the same now. Give me the paper, Martha."

She had read over again what was on it. It seemed so remarkable to her that her name should be in the newspaper, but so it had to be.

"No, no, you good child," she said objecting, "you have done enough for me. I will not have you running there for me besides. But your

CORNELLI

advice is good. I will carry the paper there myself right away."

"Oh yes, come too," said Cornelli delighted, for it was one of her especial pleasures to take a walk with old Martha, who saw remarkable things everywhere and called Cornelli's attention to them, and always knew something to tell her about them at once. Everywhere she came to places that brought up recollections of Cornelli's mother, which she immediately described with feeling to the child. Only from her did Cornelli hear her mother spoken of. Her father never told her about her, and if she asked Esther, who had been in the service of the house from the beginning, to tell her about her mother, she would say at once:

"Be still, be still, it only makes me sad. You must not bring up such things."

"So will you come too?" said Martha delighted, for she too liked nothing so well as to go to walk with her little merry companion. Cornelli hung on her arm and thus they strolled out

BY THE ROARING ILLERBACH

in the evening. The thunder clouds had scattered. Towards sunset the sky glowed like fiery gold.

“ Do you believe my mother sees it inside as beautiful as we do outside, Martha? ” asked the child pointing to the brilliant sky.

“ Yes, yes, Cornelli, ” she replied eagerly. “ Just think if the dear Lord lights up His dwelling place so beautifully from the outside, how it must be within where all the blessed are rejoicing! ”

“ Why are they rejoicing so? ” Cornelli wanted to know.

“ Oh, because they are free from all sorrow and all pain, ” said Martha, “ therefore they are well able to rejoice, and also because they now know that all the sorrow and pain affecting their loved ones, who are still here below, serve only to show them the way to call upon the one who alone can lead them into Heaven. ”

“ Did my mother call on Him too? ” asked Cornelli further.

CORNELLI

“ Yes, indeed, Cornelli, you can be sure of that,” declared Martha. “ Your mother was such a good, devout woman that every one ought to ask to go where she is.”

Now the two had reached the post-office and after they had given their commission to the landlord and postmaster, they hastened back along the friendly valley-path between the green-glowing meadows, for the twilight was coming on and the vesper bell had long since sounded from the tower.

CHAPTER II

ON THE TOP FLOOR

UP the narrow city street, the houses of which were so high that from below the upper windows could hardly be seen, because one stood so near them, an important gentleman, leaning on a big gold-headed cane, was walking one bright May morning. He had to stop from time to time to get his breath, the street was so steep. Then he read the house-numbers over again as far as he could recognize them and said repeatedly: "Not even yet." Then he climbed farther on. Finally he reached his right number. The door of the house was standing open. Six bells were installed next the door-jamb. The gentleman studied the names above them, shaking his head again and again as he did not find the one he was looking for.

"Ah, at last at the very top," he said with a sigh and went into the house. Then climbing be-

CORNELLI

gan in earnest. At first the stairs, although steep, were light and had regular steps; then they became darker and narrower and finally ended with very steep, worn-down, uneven steps leading to a narrow door, in front of which there was no room to stand except on the last narrow step.

“Is this a cage!” exclaimed the man climbing up and breathing hard, as he steadied himself on the wooden landing, for walking up the thin, cracking stairs was very unsafe. He pulled the simple bell. The door opened. A lady dressed in black stood before him.

“Oh, Herr Schaller, is it you?” she said in surprise. “I am sorry that you had to climb the tiresome stairs,” she added, as she noticed how the corpulent gentleman had to dry his face after the great exertion. “I would gladly have come to see you, if you had informed me that you wished to talk with me.” The lady meanwhile had opened the door into a room and asked the gentleman to come in and sit down.

ON THE TOP FLOOR

“ It is my duty to visit you at least once,” replied the gentleman, who had now taken a seat in the armchair, and was resting both hands on the top of his heavy cane.

“ I must tell you this at once, Frau Halm, that you have not followed my advice to take a little house in the country, where you were, but preferred to move here to the city where you naturally have had to take such an apartment under the roof that I don’t find it practical and not even desirable either. You haven’t the least comfort here. For yourself and for your children the country air would be absolutely better.”

“ I did not have to think about comfort for myself, when I lost my husband and had to leave our parsonage,” replied the lady with a faint smile. “ To be sure the country air would be better for all my children, but the one who needs it most, my older boy, delicate as he is, would have had to go away from me to the city for school, and that I could not do, even ——”

“ There are good boarding-places in the city,

CORNELLI

where such boys are well cared for," the gentleman here interrupted critically, "but what further reasons did you have?"

"My little girls are both so far advanced in learning something they can turn to account," continued the lady, "that this is quite necessary as you know very well, but in the country the opportunity for the girls' further education is hard to find, that you also know. Moving with my children to the city, therefore, was not an indiscreet desire, nor an impractical undertaking which I dared to venture. I am very grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to explain to you my reason for not following your advice."

"What are the daughters studying?" asked the gentleman shortly.

"Nika, the older, paints very well," replied the lady. "Agnes has a decided gift for music. So I thought, since both girls are very devoted to their studies, that later on they would be able to teach what they have both undertaken in earnest."

ON THE TOP FLOOR

“Unprofitable professions, after taking endless years of instruction,” said the overseer. “It seems to me it would be much more practical for the sisters to devote themselves to becoming tailoresses. Then they would quickly reach the time when they could start a business, work together and make excellent profits, which would lighten their mother’s and brother’s lives. The boy, without any hindrance, would be long enough in reaching his independence, if he studied diligently, as you say.”

The pastor’s wife looked sadly before her; she did not say another word.

“You surely understand me, Frau Halm, I am speaking entirely in your interest and your children’s,” the overseer continued. “I am sorry that I have not met your daughters. I am convinced that they would soon gladly agree with me if I should give them my reasons. To-day young people understand what it means to make their way early and profitably, believe me in that!”

“Perhaps my children are backward in this

CORNELLI

understanding through their parents' influence, and still cling to things which you have to consider unprofitable professions," said the lady with a sigh, "but I will tell my children your views as you desire, and try to express your opinions as well as I can."

"How old is your eldest daughter? She must really be able to understand reasonable arguments by this time," said the gentleman.

"Nika is in her fourteenth year, so that as she feels herself, her education in many things is still defective," replied the mother. "Dino is twelve, Agnes eleven years old, and she has first of all to finish her required schooling."

"Still young people," said the overseer shaking his head. "One thing is sure, the longer the schooling the more necessary the shortest means to the end. I am becoming more and more convinced that my plan is the right one and that you should decidedly give your daughters to a good tailoress, so that their coming to the city will be really worth while."

ON THE TOP FLOOR

In his eagerness to convince his silent listener, the overseer had not noticed that a little boy had come in, at first had hidden behind his mother, and then at a sign from her had drawn away from her side to him. He first became aware of the boys' entrance when a little fist was thrust forcibly into his closed right hand.

"Don't be offended if the little boy seems somewhat obtrusive in his greeting," apologized the mother.

"Ah, here is another one, the smallest. I really knew about him," said the anxious adviser somewhat confused. "What is your name, my boy?"

"Mux," was the answer.

The gentleman looked questioningly at his mother.

"That is a name the children have given him and has unexpectedly clung to him," she replied. "My youngest's name is Markus. He was five years old recently."

"Very good, and what do you mean to be-

CORNELLI

come, my friend Mux?" asked the educational adviser.

"A general on horseback," answered the little one immediately.

The gentleman rose.

"Madam, it seems to me your children are all somewhat ambitious," he said emphatically. "I can only wish that they may learn to see that, in this world, not every one can do what pleases him best."

The mother agreed with this good wish. "But I must tell you that the little boy's decision comes from a general on horseback in his picture-book, which attracted his attention unusually, and will pass like other childhood impressions."

"Encouragement to proper and successful work never comes too early and never comes too often; do not let that escape your attention, Frau Halm," concluded the adviser, as he took his leave and carefully went down the steep stairs.

Just at that time some one was coming up from below as swiftly as if she must not set foot on the

ON THE TOP FLOOR

steps. Since the gentleman took up all the room on the stairs, the nimble person tried to slip through the empty space under his outstretched arm, holding fast to the rail.

“Wait, wait! don’t you belong to the widow Halm?” asked the gentleman, holding his arm lower down as a barrier.

“Yes, I belong to her,” was the quick reply while the little person bent down lower in order to pass through.

“Hold still a minute, if you possibly can,” now commanded the gentleman. “I am the educational adviser, Schaller, your mother’s adviser, you must know. I have just given her some good advice for you, you understand, for your best interest. You must encourage your mother in it. You do not look stupid and can understand what would be good for all of you. Are you the older girl?”

“No, the younger one,” she answered quickly.

“So much the better, then the older one will be still more sensible, and you will both work to-

CORNELLI

gether for the welfare of the whole family, and willingly follow my advice." Whereupon he offered his hand to the child and went on.

Agnes shot up the rest of the stairs and rushed into the narrow corridor. Her brother Mux was standing waiting for her in the open doorway, as was his custom at the time when his sisters ought to return, for he loved the change which followed the quiet morning.

"A big man has been here, and then Mother said: 'Oh Lord!' And you can't play the piano any more," he exclaimed.

Agnes rushed into the room, then out again. "Where is Mother? Mother! Mother!" she shouted, throwing open one door after another.

"Here, Agnes, only don't be so stormy," sounded from the kitchen.

Agnes ran there. "Mother, what is Mux saying? Is it true? I know that Herr Schaller has been here and that he is the one to say what we must do. What did he say? Is it true, what Mux told me? Then I would rather never do

ON THE TOP FLOOR

anything more, and never eat any more, and never sleep any more and nothing more at all. Then everything is at an end."

Agnes stood in the kitchen doorway, with her cheeks crimson from excitement, her eyes flashing fire.

"No, child, you mustn't talk so, and get so terribly excited," admonished her mother, calmly. "This is no time to talk about a question that requires complete peace. This evening we will talk it over. You know very well, Agnes, that I entirely sympathize with you in your wishes and endeavors, so that it is my affair as well as yours. Let us wait until we have a quiet hour and then we can talk it all over together."

The words quieted the child. It was really so. She knew their mother sympathized with them in everything with her whole heart. She had the same keen yearning, that now in the city Agnes's long cherished desire for a musical education might be fulfilled. It was really her mother's affair as well as hers. She also could count on her

CORNELLI

mother's help. She went quickly to her work in the kitchen, since she, as well as her sister, had to lend a hand there so that their mother should not do the work, for there was only a very young maid, as servant in the house, and she could accomplish very little in the necessary routine of work.

Mux had returned to his post, for the fact that his words had made such an impression on Agnes and called forth such excitement, had provided him with great entertainment. He immediately wanted to produce the effect again.

Then he heard some one coming up the stairs; it was Nika. "A big man has been here, and after he had gone, Mother said: 'Oh my Lord!' and you mustn't paint any more trees, nor any more flowers," he called down to her from above.

But Nika had not met Herr Schaller, so the words had no meaning to her. She went quite undisturbed and silently past her brother and entered the room. Mux was very much disappointed. Now he heard his brother running up.

ON THE TOP FLOOR

He had to give vent to his disappointment on him.

“No, we are not going to have what you think,” he called to his brother as he came along.

“What shall I think that we are going to have, you thought-director?” his brother called up to him.

“When you think we are going to have green peas at noon, you always come up so fast, because you can’t wait, because you are so terribly fond of them,” declared Mux, “but we haven’t any. We are going to have cabbage, now you know!”

“Well then, come in, we will see who will make up the worst face over it, you or I.”

Whereupon Dino, having reached the top, seized the little boy by the hand and made a great leap with him into the living-room.

Soon afterwards the family were sitting together at the dinner-table in the small room. Today it was not as usual when each child wanted to be allowed to talk first and their mother did

CORNELLI

not know how she should control all the communications coming at once. It was still and oppressive as before a thunder-storm; heavy clouds lay on every face, except one. Agnes had just told her sister something that made the little boy's threatening words plain. She sat brooding there, looking at her plate and swallowed and swallowed, while she could not bring a bit of food to her mouth, as if she had enough in it to carry down already. Agnes knit her brows so that her whole forehead looked wrinkled. That their mother was beset with heavy thoughts in every direction could be gathered from her troubled looks. The usually talkative Mux nibbled his cabbage with a sigh. Only Dino with his merry smile looked from one to the other with expectant eyes. His dinner did not seem to occupy him very much.

“I am expecting a thunder-storm,” he then said, since the stillness continued. “Nika will let loose the lightning, flashing under her eyelashes, and Agnes will not hesitate to let the

ON THE TOP FLOOR

thunder follow. Then the rain will come down immediately, for Mux can hardly keep back his flood of tears longer over the unlucky cabbage."

"Yes indeed, you have eaten much less cabbage than I," said Mux in a petulant tone.

"You see, Mux, I do that out of sheer modesty, so that nobody will come short," explained the brother.

"Yes, Dino, if I had time I would answer you about the thunder and the cabbage," Agnes broke out, "but in an hour I have a music lesson and then I shall have enough more to swallow besides cabbage."

"I should like it better if your modesty would show in other ways," said his mother with a rather sad smile. "To-day you have eaten nothing again, and in the night I heard you coughing so much. Of all that worries me, your condition is the most distressing. Did you cough like that in school?"

"Yes indeed, Mother, but there is nothing

CORNELLI

distressing about that," replied Dino cheerfully; "it will soon pass off. The Professor said to-day that I should have done better to graze in the fertile pastures of my native village than to seek out the dusty corners of the city; but I replied: 'Latin does not spring from fertile pastures, Professor.'"

"I hope you didn't make that reply," said his mother quite shocked.

"Oh, surely, but only in thought. You mustn't let that worry you," stated Dino soothingly.

"The Professor was quite right," said his mother with a sigh. "A thought has come to me, which we will talk about this evening with you too, Nika and Agnes. I will calmly consider our adviser's proposals. Only do me one favor, not to look so terribly unhappy. Everything is not yet lost."

"It will really come to that," said Nika and left the room.

"Yes, and still worse," added Agnes, who

ON THE TOP FLOOR

stormily pushed her chair back in its place, shoved her music book into her case, and hastily ran away.

“What is still worse than losing everything?” Dino called questioningly after her.

“I know what,” said Mux knowingly, while Agnes threw a look back at the questioner, which plainly said:

“If I had time, I should know how to answer you.”

“What then, you wise man?” asked Dino.

“If you had nothing to eat forever but cabbage,” answered Mux so convincingly that one would suppose he had formed his opinion from his own experience.

His mother then carefully stroked Dino’s thick hair, as he had also risen to go away.

“You will take care not to run too fast, my boy, won’t you?” she asked. “You will get too hot and afterwards have to sit in the cool school-room. See, I can never let you go off without anxiety.”

CORNELLI

“But, Mother dear, I am not at all so sick,” said Dino, embracing his mother tenderly. “You know if one coughs just once, then he stops every time. I do exactly so. Just be happy and everything will be all right. But now I must run.”

“Only don’t hurry so terribly, Dino. You still have time enough, think of that!” his mother called after him. Then she stepped quickly to the open window and looked down the street as long as she could see anything of the running boy.

Dino was her special care. He was always happy and good-natured and instead of giving trouble, disposed all the others to be happy, above all his mother. But every day the boy looked a little more delicate and showed less appetite which did not escape the watchful mother’s eyes.

Of all the burdens she had to bear, this realization was the hardest, as could be understood from the painful expression of her face, as she

ON THE TOP FLOOR

closed the window and then seated herself at her sewing.

Mux had asked his mother the same question three times and had not been heard at all. Then he raised his voice forcibly and asked for the fourth time:

“Mamma, why do we have to eat what the cows have?”

“What do you mean, Mux?” she asked then, “what do you want to say?”

“I saw very plainly in the picture-book that they were the same leaves as those in the kitchen,” was his rather vague explanation.

But his mother understood at once, for she remembered how carefully he had noticed the green leaves the maid had brought early that morning into the kitchen. Immediately there came before her eyes a picture in the beloved picture-book, where wonderful green leaves were set before the shining brown cow by the stable boy.

“Are you still thinking about your cabbage and still with displeasure? That is not at all

CORNELLI

right," said his mother. " You see there are poor children who have to go hungry; that is very painful, and you get good bread to eat with your well-cooked vegetables."

" Then let us send them the rest of the cabbage we have to eat," Mux quickly proposed.

" Come, take the worsted work, which I have begun for you; we will see who will do the most work, then you will forget about your cabbage. Come sit down here by me."

His mother pushed his little chair nearer to her, gave the work into the child's flexible fingers and then the needles began the race. In his eagerness to outdo his mother, Mux finally forgot what had disturbed his mind so that he could hardly get away from it.

Later evening had come, when all school work was ended and the mother was wont to place her big mending basket beside her and take light knitting in her hand, which did not demand any of her thoughts. This was the hour when the children all pressed around her and each was

ON THE TOP FLOOR

accustomed to bring his special problems to her. For little Mux this was the hardest moment of the day, for regularly before his mother sat down to begin talking with the three older ones, she would first take the hand of her youngest to put him to bed. This led every evening to the same struggle with the same result, for crafty Mux contrived through headstrong opposition to overthrow the rule, but his mother knew that the success of his plan would give no joy, but only pitiful yawning and closing of the eyes to follow. To-night his mother must have been in unusual haste, for before the little boy was ready for the struggle he found himself by his bed and immediately after made ready for the night. When he once reached his bed, Mux was always reconciled to his fate, for then came the moment when his mother sat down quietly beside him in order to let him, like the others, tell her everything that lay on his heart. But when he had said his evening prayer, came the irrevocable end to all conversation. This Mux knew very well and there-

CORNELLI

fore tried every night by every means to postpone this final word as far as possible.

“Mamma,” said Mux after climbing into his bed in a thoughtful way, “if everywhere where cabbage grows, they would plant real cherries, then everybody could eat cherries instead of having to eat cabbage.”

“Now we will stop right away, my little Mux,” said his mother to his surprise, for he had thought of introducing a long conversation. “You see you can’t get away from your cabbage to-day, but you must go to sleep. You have talked enough about it.”

Mux knew for that day there was nothing more to be done. As soon as he had ended his evening prayer and given his mother a kiss he laid himself on his side and was asleep when his mother closed the door behind her.

Agnes had just finished her last home lesson and threw her copy-book and books into the drawer, hurling each one more vigorously after the other; she must have been impelled by some

ON THE TOP FLOOR

strong inner emotion. As soon as she saw her mother come into the room she burst forth:

“No, Mother, if I can’t learn to sing and play the piano right, I would rather not learn anything, not a single thing. I will become a chamber-maid right away. I can do that very well and when I have earned enough money, I will buy a harp and then I will go from house to house, singing. Then I shall be able to earn my living, too. Nobody needs to be a tailoress; you can wear an under-petticoat and a jacket besides; you can make these, and nobody needs anything different. All the other children are better off than we, Mamma; they can learn what they like, and we can’t at all.” Then came a flood of tears which stopped all further words.

During her sister’s stormy speech Nika had bent her head lower and lower over the drawing, on which she worked away without looking up. Then a tear dropped from her eyes also. She pushed her paper away and held her handkerchief before her face.

CORNELLI

“ Oh, children, don’t be so completely dis-couraged all at once,” said their mother, looking most anxiously at the two weeping girls. “ You surely know your grief is my grief and that I am doing and will still do everything to enable you to learn what you so long to do. It would be also my greatest pleasure to be able to culti-vate your talents so that you could earn your living by your music and painting. But if this cannot be, children, then we must hold fast to the belief that it would not be best for you, that the dear Lord knows some other way which would be better for you. Let us only not lose faith and hold fast to the consolation that a Father in Heaven leads us all with love. He will not for-get us, and we must not forget either that He sees farther than we and knows why He leads us so and not differently, even if we do not understand it at the moment. Sometime we shall understand that the burden was only laid upon us as a blessing for us.”

“ Now let us be happy again and start a song,”

ON THE TOP FLOOR

interrupted Dino, who was quite happy and preferred to have every one around him look happy.
“ Let us sing at once:

Whatever storms the Winter brings
The victory at last is Spring’s,
And if our Agnes so avers
This comfort will be surely hers! ”

“ Yes indeed, Dino, you may well laugh,” replied Agnes. “ If you had to be a tailor you would whistle another tune. You can learn everything and study everything you like.”

“ No, I don’t really care to study everything, only one thing,” corrected Dino. “ But do you know what, Agnes? Your singing is much finer than your reasoning, so begin right away. If my song doesn’t please you, try another one.”

“ Then let us sing together to end the day, children,” said their mother, “ but now I have something more to talk about with you, Dino. Your cough and the way you look make me anxious, and I have been casting about for some

CORNELLI

time, to see where I could take you, so that you could spend several weeks in the country air to get strong. There are really places enough, but I must find a simple house, and yet I want to take you to a house where you will have some care. Now to-day I have found an advertisement that may perhaps be what I am looking for. See here, Dino, read the advertisement yourself."

Dino took the paper and read. Then he laughed out loud. "Yes indeed, Mother, I must go there," he said, still shaking with laughter, "to Martha on the Illerbach. It is surely so cheerful at Martha Wolff's where it is so beautifully furnished and boasts such pretty covers."

Then his sisters wanted to know how the advertisement read, which brought forth such laughter from Dino. He read to them Martha Wolff's advertisement in Illerbach, and all thought that this Martha must have a very pleasant place. Their mother decided to write at once to the woman and then to take her Dino there as soon as possible.

ON THE TOP FLOOR

“ Children, now let us sing an evening song,” she then said, seating herself at the old piano, for she always accompanied the chorals which were sung every evening by the children.

“ You must sing this for me to-night, children,” she said, opening her book, and starting the song. The children all three raised their good voices and sang:

In God confide
Whate'er betide;
When all the world deserts thee
And no one knows
What weight of woes
Oppresses thee and hurts thee.

Ere thou dost speak
Or His aid seek
Thy need He comprehendeth;
He's tenderer far
Than mothers are
And from all ills defendeth.

CHAPTER III

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

THERE was great excitement in the Director's house in Illerbach. The day had come when the two ladies from the city were expected for their long visit. The master had ordered everything nicely prepared and a festive meal made ready for his two guests who were to arrive at noon. He was in the best humor, for he had been fondly looking forward for several days to his cousin's coming. He ought by all means to be starting on his journey, but did not think it proper to leave before he had welcomed his guests and had given over the house to his cousin, according to his express wish. The day after her arrival she would gladly allow him to be free for his journey, so the following day was set for his departure.

The preparations made Cornelli feel that the

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

guests' arrival was not going to be very desirable for her. Usually when visitors were expected she always had the most delightful prospect before her. First she would run to the kitchen, where there was kneading and baking, and she would hardly appear on the threshold before Esther would call: "Come try these; which is better? They are both really not so bad." A little golden yellow apple-cake and a rosy, round plum tart would be already on a little plate for her, as her visit was expected. Every time Cornelli could bear witness that the apple-cakes had turned out excellently and the plum tarts still much better.

Then she would go over to the pantry. Here Mine would be standing and arranging the dessert on little crystal plates. Then some of the single Malaga raisins would fall from the bunches of blue dried grapes beside the plate and some of the almonds piled on top would keep rolling down and one after another would quickly disappear in Cornelli's pockets. To

CORNELLI

carry away such a supply and bring it out at a suitable moment, was always a very pleasant anticipation for Cornelli. Mine would quite intentionally let an abundance of almonds and raisins drop from the plates. She did not want to be less sought after than Esther, and she knew very well why Cornelli liked so much to run to the kitchen.

To-day Esther was hurrying around with dishes and pans in the kitchen, so that everything rattled.

“ Go away! Go away! There is nothing for you to-day,” she called to Cornelli, who was just coming in to see what was baking. “ The ladies from the city must not think they will have to show one of us anything about cooking a good dinner. They will soon learn that. Make room, Cornelli, make room. I must prepare the vegetables here.”

Cornelli ran across to the pantry.

Mine had just finished an artistic arrangement of pretzels and almond cakes. “ Don’t come

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

rushing in so or everything will fall to pieces," she called to the child. "Don't come so near the table. See there is a plate already arranged. Nothing must be lacking. I don't want the ladies to say it is easy to see that there is no wife in the house, they can't even set a table here."

"If everybody is so mean in this house, I will have nothing to do with it," said Cornelli, turning round and running angrily towards the door.

An approaching carriage was heard outside. Cornelli ran across the open area in front of the house to the road and looked out. To be sure, the expected carriage was approaching; two ladies were sitting inside. The child ran back. "Mathis, Mathis!" she called over to the building a little way from the house behind the trees. The barn and the big stables were there. "Come quickly, the carriage is nearly here."

Mathis, who looked after the horses and the young boy Hans, and had all the work in the stable and garden to oversee, was Cornelli's especial friend, whom she had always known, for

CORNELLI

he had been in the house long before she was born; he had been in her grandfather's service.

Mathis came to the stable-door and beckoned mysteriously.

“Come here, Cornelli, come quickly, as fast as you can; then we will go to the carriage.”

Cornelli ran across. In the corner of the stable, nicely bedded in the hay, lay a little snow-white kid, looking like the prettiest toy, but it was really alive.

“Oh, where did you get it, Mathis? Oh, how pretty it is! Its white fur is just like silk! Can it go alone? Can't it stand up if it wants to? Oh see, how friendly it lays its little head on me!”

“Come now, come, the carriage is here. You can visit it every day,” urged Mathis. “Come quickly! It only came into the world to-day, think of that!”

It was really so. The carriage was coming into the courtyard. Mathis was punctually on the spot when the horses stopped. The Director ap-

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

peared at the same moment in the yard. He lost no time, but neither was he accustomed to be impolite. He had stationed a watch to call him the moment the carriage came near the house. The Director helped his cousin out of the carriage and greeted her heartily. Then he helped Fräulein Grideelen to alight and expressed his warm thanks to her for being so friendly as to accompany his cousin in her loneliness. For him it was a real kindness, for it would have troubled him to leave his sacrificing cousin so long alone, and yet pressing business might keep him away from home longer than he expected.

“Where is your daughter, Friedrich?” the cousin then asked.

The Director looked around him. “I saw her just now somewhere around. Where are you, Cornelli?” he called towards the house.

“Here I am,” sounded close to him.

Cornelli had placed herself behind her father, that unseen from there she could watch the arrivals.

CORNELLI

“Come here, and greet your cousin and Fräulein Grideelen,” commanded her father.

Cornelli held out her hand first to her relative then to the other lady.

“Good morning,” she said both times.

“You may call me cousin; this lady is Fräulein Grideelen,” said the cousin, expecting the child to repeat her greeting over again with the correct address. Cornelli said nothing more.

The Director had turned around towards the carriage. He gave Mathis directions about the horses. They then went into the house, and soon after the company was seated at the richly-laden dinner-table and Mine harvested much praise for the well managed table service. In the afternoon the Director took the ladies around his estate. His cousin wished to learn in detail about everything she would have to oversee.

“What quantities of fruit!” exclaimed Fräulein Grideelen again and again. “How many cherry-trees! And these huge apple-trees! And that row of pear-trees! Really, Herr Hellmut,

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

you must be able to fill whole rooms with fruit in the Autumn! Where do you have a place for it all?"

"Well, I really don't know. The people take care of that. I have no time."

"It is really shameful, Friedrich, that you haven't half a dozen children. They would help you take care of these things," remarked the cousin. "But what has become of the one you have? She does not seem to be very companionable."

"Where Cornelli is I do not know," said the Director. "At this time I am usually over at my work. Mine must know what the child is doing. Perhaps her teacher is here. The child really can't be companionable when she is always alone. I am so happy on her account and so grateful to you ladies for coming. So at last Cornelli is in the society I have long desired for her. What could I do? I have had governesses come twice to the house in order to give the child suitable intercourse and instruction. The first ran away from

CORNELLI

me, because she could not bear the lonely house, and the second wanted to have everybody out of the house that had been there before her. Esther must leave, Mathis must go away and as I had no intention of letting them both go, she gave me the choice, either she or some of the old house-rats must leave the house. I said: 'You had better go, for if I should send the two away I should be the oldest house-rat, and it would really come to me to make room.' Then she went away. Now I have no more courage for that kind of service, although the time has come when it really is more necessary than ever for Cornelli to have a woman of culture and education with her. Perhaps you will have some good advice to give, Cousin, when you have learned to know the child well."

"I should like to know whom the child resembles," said Fräulein Dorner. "She has no feature of yours nor of your late wife."

"Do you think so?" asked the Director quickly. "Do you really think so? The child doesn't need to be like me, but I had always

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

hoped she would have some resemblance to her mother, which would appear more and more later on and would bring her picture before me. Don't you think the child has Cornelia's eyes? And her beautiful brown hair might perhaps later grow out of the present tangle on the child's head; it is so thick and has the same color as Cornelia's hair."

The Director looked at his cousin almost imploringly; it mattered so much to him to have her express the same opinion.

She shrugged her shoulders. "I must say that I see no resemblance in the rough, wild thing to your pretty Cornelia, always in order and shining spotlessly neat with her beaming eyes, which smiled so kindly under her brown wavy hair. I must tell you frankly, Friedrich, your child does not seem very attractive; she looks like a naughty wild kitten that arches its back and bristles its fur as if it were going to spring at your face."

"No, no, she is really not like that at all," said the Director, "the child is not bad. I don't think

CORNELLI

she is in the least so. But you are really right," he continued sighing, "she doesn't look like her mother. Perhaps her bringing up, that is the lack of bringing up, is much to blame for it. Therefore I am so grateful to you and Fräulein Grideelen, that you ladies have come and will remain here for a while. Surely under your influence and oversight the child will become quite different and improve very much. I do not think she will be difficult to train. How light-heartedly I can now go away, as I can give my little girl, my house and servants and everything into your hands, Cousin! You cannot believe how desperate my situation often is when I need to travel, and it is impossible to leave because I have no one to whom I can give up everything, who not only would have good will, like the servants, but also intelligence and above all authority to manage the house properly. I cannot thank you enough for making my journey easy."

When the company had returned from their walk they separated. The ladies went to estab-

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

lish themselves in their rooms; the Director still had plenty to do, to get ready for his journey. At the supper-table they would be together again. So it happened. The ladies had seated themselves; the Director appeared punctually on time. The food was served.

“Where is your daughter?” asked Fräulein Dorner, looking around. “Isn’t she coming to supper?”

“Surely, surely. Do you know where she is, Mine?” the father asked.

Just then the door opened and Cornelli came running in with glowing cheeks. She seated herself quickly in her place.

“Did you crawl through a hedge?” asked the cousin.

“No, I was in the hen-house,” answered Cornelli.

“Yes, you look as if you had been there. Go first to your room and let Mine arrange your hair and use soap where it is necessary.”

Cornelli looked at her father. This was an

CORNELLI

innovation which he would really have to confirm.

“Quickly, quickly, Cornelli, what are you thinking about?” said her father authoritatively. “You have to obey your cousin; she stands entirely in my place. Everybody in the house must understand that,” he added with a look at Mine.

Mine was ready to obey this, but the child called back: “I can do it myself,” and ran out.

When she returned her face and hands were washed very clean, but her hair was so peculiarly combed that one did not know what belonged on one side or the other, what belonged in front and what behind. The cousin laughed.

“Your head looks like a wind-blown hayfield,” she said. “Mine must part your hair properly to-morrow.”

Cornelli knit her brows so that her eyes came close together. She did not look up from her plate again.

Early the next day the Director started away. The village of Illerbach, where the church and

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

school stood, was too far from the iron-works for Cornelli to walk there every day to school. Besides the Director thought it better to have her taught at home. So he had engaged a teacher to come every morning to instruct Cornelli in all the necessary studies. In the afternoon she was free. The lessons, which had to be prepared for the following day, took little time. So until now Cornelli had led a very free life and had always had as much time for her daily visits to her old friend Martha and her endless talks with her, as they required. Besides there was time enough for long walks through the beechwoods and over the whole mountain; Cornelli never had any to spare. It was never too long to the child for there were so many thousands of beautiful things in field and woods to hunt for that she never was at an end if only the sun would always shine. If it would not and no wandering about in the rain or snow was possible, then Martha's cheerful little living-room was always a splendid retreat, and her talks and stories were an inexhaustible

CORNELLI

source of pleasure and entertainment for Cornelli.

The teacher had just left the house. Her father's going away to-day had given so much material for sentences which Cornelli had to furnish in her lesson hour of the German language, and all her answers to every question came so readily that her teacher on the stroke of the hour announced that lessons were ended and besides gave Cornelli unusual praise for her good work this morning. Then he took his leave, and Cornelli shook his offered hand vigorously, for her teacher and she were the best of friends.

These lessons always passed with the greatest satisfaction to both parties, the teacher knew his pupil so well. If she was very fresh and lively he would work away diligently with her and accomplish so much in a short time that the hours would produce three times as much as had been expected. Then he would let his pupil go punctually on the stroke of the hour; she must always keep happy about her work, and no feel-

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

ing of weariness must destroy it. But if Cornelli was inattentive and dull at her work, her teacher would go slowly and deliberately with her as if she were a little weak-minded and this lingering progress was persistently urged forward by the teacher until the hand of the clock pointed to a quarter of an hour, a half hour and even three-quarters beyond the regular time. Then there would be only a good quarter hour left, which Cornelli would have for running to the garden, stable and the hen-house before dinner. At last the teacher would really leave off and as he went away would say with the greatest friendliness:

“ I had to stay so long to-day because we didn’t finish half what we might have done. You were a little slow of comprehension to-day, Cornelli. To-morrow you will surely do better, or else the lessons will last still longer.”

The next day it was sure to be quite different, for Cornelli did not intend to go through such a terribly tiresome experience again, and even

CORNELLI

more so. It was always a long time before a day of great distraction came again.

To-day Cornelli had unusual inducement to work industriously and quickly, in order to have free time. She had not been able to see the little kid since yesterday. She rushed over to the stable. She had a whole hour before dinner-time, which was at one o'clock. Mathis had seen the child running along.

“Come, come, Cornelli, it is just jumping about,” he called to her.

Cornelli hurried along and went into the stable. To be sure there the snow-white kid was jumping so happily to its mother and then back again into the hay and was so pretty in its frisking that Cornelli was in raptures over it.

“You pretty little creature, you!” she exclaimed, stroking its snow-white hair; “I will bring you a red collar, and then I will take you to walk.” Then she ran back to the house, rummaged about among her things and returned with a bright red ribbon. This was then tied around

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

the kid's neck and Cornelli felt she had never seen anything prettier than the tiny little creature in its snow-white coat with the crimson bow on its neck as it continued its light gamboling and then suddenly cuddled down in its bed of hay and looked at Cornelli quite contentedly.

“Can I take it out, Mathis? Can I take it to walk? Can I harness it to a little wagon and drive it?” asked Cornelli, making so many plans that one overlapped another.

“Wait, wait, first let it grow, that is the chief thing,” said Mathis thoughtfully. “You see, now the tiny creature is like a little child that has just learned to walk. It must still stay with its mother, and can only jump around her a little. When it is older you can take it to walk, and when it is big and strong then it can be harnessed, and you can drive it out, two reins in one hand and a big switch in the other.”

Cornelli shouted for joy and stroked the kid with new tenderness in anticipation of the splendid rides she would have with it, later.

CORNELLI

“Did you hear the bell in the foundry? It must be dinner-time. You ought to be a little attentive now that strangers are here,” said old Mathis prudently. “You can come back again this afternoon.”

Cornelli was so delighted with her pretty white kid that she had not heard it, but she went immediately, for she had the feeling that now she must be at the table on time, for Cornelli had already noticed that the ladies did not bury themselves in a paper as her Papa did. She ran to the house. At the well in the courtyard, it occurred to her that she still had to wash her hands. She held them both under the pipe and rubbed them vigorously. Her face too was dipped in and rubbed. There was nothing there to dry them on, except her handkerchief, and this was rather small.

“Hurry, hurry, the ladies are already sitting at the table,” sounded Esther’s warning voice from the kitchen window.

Cornelli ran in. To be sure the ladies were

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

already seated at the table; a well-filled soup plate was waiting for Cornelli in her place, and she sat down quickly.

“ You should come to the table on time. You can very easily hear the loud bell over there,” said her cousin. “ But how you look! Wet arms, apron all wet, wet feet—have you been in the water? What were you doing? ”

“ I washed my hands under the water-pipe and it spattered,” said Cornelli.

“ Very likely,” remarked Fräulein Dorner, “ but there are arrangements in your room for washing your hands, without getting spattered. Go, put on another apron. You must appear tidy at the table.”

Cornelli went out.

“ But there is something good in the child that she can obey,” said Fräulein Grideelen. “ She always comes freshly washed to the table since you gave her the direction.”

“ That is right,” replied Fräulein Dorner, “ but she has unbelievable habits and manners.

CORNELLI

How can I root them out and make the child tidy? You really must help her in the morning and above all comb and brush her hair smooth, as I said yesterday, Mine."

"I really have done so, Fräulein, and do it every morning," she replied somewhat offended, "but her hair is too unmanageable to braid. If Cornelli only jumps once it is all in disorder on her head again, and she is jumping every minute."

Cornelli had returned. She finally finished her soup. Her seat was next her cousin's; Fräulein Grideelen sat opposite her.

"What is that clinging to your dress?" asked the cousin, looking with aversion at the hem of her little frock to which something different appeared to be hanging. "Can that be hay or straw? It does not look neat. You surely haven't come from the stable?"

"Yes, indeed," replied Cornelli.

"How dreadful! Truly I smell it. That is going a little too far!" exclaimed the cousin.

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

“Your Papa would surely not allow it, if he knew about it.”

“Yes, really; he goes there himself,” replied Cornelli.

“Don’t be impertinent. It is very different with your Papa,” explained the cousin. “But one thing I will tell you, and you must think about it. If you are allowed to go into the stable, and you find pleasure in it, do so, but if you come to the table afterwards, go first to your room, wash yourself thoroughly and put on another dress. You mustn’t forget this, you understand!”

“Yes,” replied Cornelli.

“It is strange what children in the country have to enjoy,” said Fräulein Grideelen. “Haven’t you any books, Cornelli; wouldn’t you much rather read than rove about so, even to the stable?”

“No, I wouldn’t rather do that. I have plenty of books,” answered the child.

“What are you going to do now after din-

CORNELLI

ner? You surely have no more lessons," asked the cousin.

"Then I am going to see Martha," was the answer.

"Who is Martha?" the cousin wanted to know.

"A woman," said Cornelli.

"I understand that," remarked Fräulein Dorner, "but what kind of a woman?"

"A good one," answered Cornelli quickly.

"What an answer!" The cousin turned to Mine: "Who is this woman? Can the child be allowed to go to see her? Is she known in the house?"

"Yes, she has been known for a long time. She came here before I did," stated Mine. "She nursed the late wife here in her last illness. She is a good woman and always looks neat and tidy. The master likes her."

"Well, now I know where I am. You must really learn to answer properly, Cornelli," said the cousin. "You are like a wild hare, always

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

on the jump. Then you can go to see the woman, but first sit down and do your lessons for the teacher; you really must have some for to-morrow."

Cornelli admitted this.

As soon as the ladies had gone out to retire to their sleeping rooms for the warmest hours, Cornelli sat down at her table in the corner and wrote a full page like lightning. Then she seized her books and read quickly again and again until she knew her lesson by heart. Then the books were thrown into the cupboard and Cornelli hurried away.

"Really, Martha, you ought to know how it is at our house since Papa went away," Cornelli called up the steps to old Martha. "I only wish Papa was back again, and everything as before!"

"What is it, Cornelli; what makes you so cross? Come, come, sit down by me a little while and tell me about it," said Martha kindly and placed a chair by hers at the table, on which her

CORNELLI

patchwork lay. It was arranged very neatly, each piece according to its shape.

“Really, you can’t understand how it is, Martha,” continued Cornelli in irrepressible excitement; “with you it is always the same, and nobody comes and orders you to have everything different. Now I mustn’t come in any more without washing myself and never come from the stable without putting on another dress, and not wash my hands at the spring, because it spatters and oh, so many new things have to be and everything different from before.”

“Well, you see, Cornelli, it isn’t so bad that nothing is any longer the same as before,” said Martha discreetly. “I think the lady, who is related to you, wants to do with you as your mother would have surely done if she had stayed here, and that is only something for your good. You see, Mine and Esther mean very well for you, but your relative knows much better what you ought to do, to become what your blessed mother had in mind for you. Think how de-

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

lighted your father will be if you become like her, and always remind him of her when he looks at you! You know surely what a pleasure that would be for him!"

Cornelli really knew that her father would be delighted over it; he had already made many remarks about it, which she could easily understand. Quite recently he had said his cousin thought his child had no resemblance to her mother, and Cornelli had noticed the sad expression in her father's eyes when he said so.

Cornelli shook her head. "I can never be like that," she stated, "and you said yourself that Mother wasn't like anybody else. You said that, Martha, so I can never be so."

"Yes indeed, I said that," the old woman acknowledged, "but you see, Cornelli, I will explain something to you. If you cannot become exactly like your mother, you could surely be more like her, much more so than any one else, because you are her child, and a child always has something of the mother. You often look at one

CORNELLI

exactly as your mother did, with the same brown eyes, but not when you scowl as you do to-day. You must notice carefully how the two ladies do everything and how they talk, and how they behave in every way. They are of the same sort and class as your mother, so I am very happy indeed about you, because you can learn from them her ways so that you can become like your mother in deed and demeanor."

"Yes, I will surely do what you say," replied Cornelli willingly, "but still I am not so terribly happy to have them here and have everything so different. Oh, now it occurs to me that there is something else and I must go immediately. Just think, Martha, at this time I always used to go and get apples and cherries and whatever else there was and run around in the garden, eating them. They tasted best there. But now punctually at five o'clock I must be sitting again at the table and must drink very hot coffee and milk, for Fräulein Dorner has said in the country the afternoons are so unbearably long, they

NEW ARRIVALS IN ILLERBACH

must make a break in them because supper doesn't come until eight o'clock. If only I could add to my afternoon what is too long for them. I can never do all I plan no matter how long they are. Good-bye, Martha!"

Then Cornelli ran out.

CHAPTER IV

SOMETHING UNDESIRABLE HAPPENS

ESTHER, the trusty mistress of the kitchen, was standing in the vegetable garden, picking green peas which were hanging down in plentiful clusters for they had ripened fast during the warm days of this sunny month of June.

“Come down here, Cornelli,” she called from the garden, “come see how many peas there are. Why do you crawl around so and not come running as usual?”

“I don’t dare do as I used to any more,” replied Cornelli coming along. “Now Mine has begun too and says I must not jump any more or my hair will be tangled. I only wish I didn’t have a single hair on my head, so I could still run and jump.”

“No, no, then you would look very strange; just imagine it. But you don’t need to be so

SOMETHING HAPPENS

sad on that account," said Esther consolingly. "Just go on jumping, your hair can be made tidy again. Why don't you come into the kitchen any more to try how good everything is?"

"I don't dare to. Fräulein Dorner has forbidden it; she says it is bad manners," explained Cornelli.

"Indeed, you might do worse, but you must surely obey, you must obey," affirmed Esther. "Don't you go any longer to Mine when she is preparing the dessert?"

Cornelli shook her head.

Mine had very quickly realized that a new order had been established in the house, and had immediately accommodated herself to it. When she thought the ladies would not agree to an old custom in the house, she let it quickly drop and Cornelli also immediately understood her changed attitude.

"It is all the same to me; if I mustn't go into the pantry, I don't care," said Cornelli, breaking

CORNELLI

forth. "She can eat everything that drops down herself, I don't care. I don't want any of it, if only I can go into the stable to see the little kid, that is the prettiest creature in the whole world. Have you seen it, Esther?"

"Yes, indeed, why not?" she answered. "Mathis took me out into the stable as soon as it was there. You can surely look at it when it is in your own stable, so go there as much as you like; nobody can prevent you."

"My teacher is coming," exclaimed Cornelli, "now I must go."

"Yes, and just be happy. You see there are still things to be happy about. I am making strawberry fritters; you must see how they taste!"

Esther smacked her lips to indicate the inviting taste of her work.

"I don't care if you are going to make stinging-nettle fritters. I would rather not come to the table at all, and have nothing but berries and milk in the garden and in the stable."

SOMETHING HAPPENS

With these words Cornelli ran to the house. She had forgotten again that she must be quiet in her ways.

The two ladies were sitting on the garden bench in the jasmine-covered arbor while Cornelli had her instruction up in the living-room.

“It would be so lovely here and my cousin would have a very delightful life, if only his child were a little different,” said Fräulein Dorner. “Don’t you think, Betty, that there is something entirely uncivilized about her inwardly and outwardly?”

“Yes, perhaps her first early training was at fault,” said Fräulein Grideelen, “or perhaps her mother was something like the child.”

“No resemblance. You can’t think of anything more unlike than this mother and her child,” exclaimed her friend Kitti. “Cornelia was loveableness itself, always happy, always meeting every one with her laughing brown eyes. I wish so much for my cousin’s sake that the

CORNELLI

child had some slight resemblance to her mother. He was so fond of her and he himself is so good and kind and really an admirable man."

"It is so strange how entirely different children can be from their parents," said Fräulein Grideelen regretfully, "but it must still be possible to accomplish something with this child through education. Much can still be developed which is not apparent now. Pains must be taken for this on her father's account."

"I surely want to do that and am trying to as you see, Betty, but so far I see little result," replied Fräulein Dorner. "I only hope the day is coming when I can give her father glad news about his daughter, not such as I now have to write him."

This was an unusually hot day. The ladies withdrew to their rooms immediately after dinner. Cornelli, as she always did now, obediently prepared her lessons, as soon as she rose from the table; then she disappeared.

Later in the evening when the ladies sat down

SOMETHING HAPPENS

at the table for supper, it was so warm that Mine was told to open all the windows.

Then Cornelli came in.

“ For mercy’s sake, what are you thinking about! ” exclaimed the cousin to the child. “ We are perishing from the heat and you have put on a fur-trimmed dress, which you could wear sleigh-riding in Winter without a coat! What in all the world made you do such a foolish thing? ”

Really Cornelli had on a remarkable dress. Her gown was of such a thick furry material that one could see it was intended for the severest winter weather and to suit one who disliked wearing outer wraps. The child’s cheeks were burning from it and whole brooks were running down over her face from the intolerable heat.

“ I have no other dress left, ” she said somewhat irritably.

“ Do you understand anything about this? ” the cousin asked, looking at her friend.

“ I really believe it is the fifth dress I have seen the child in to-day, ” she replied. “ Early

CORNELLI

this morning I saw Cornelli in a dark dress running about the courtyard. She came to breakfast in a light dress. At dinner-time she had on a red dress and for afternoon coffee she was, I think, in blue. So this dress is the fifth to-day. At noon I wondered at the frequent change of clothing."

"I have to put on a different dress every time when I have been in the stable," said Cornelli, even a little more irritably than before.

"What makes you do such things!" exclaimed the cousin. "I can really understand that you are getting no fun out of it. You are making a frightful face. You must really be almost perishing. Eat your supper quickly, then you can go to your room and undress. You must have a morning dress. Now these visits to the stable must certainly be given up. You see yourself what unpleasantness they cause. If only you wouldn't scowl so; you look exactly as if you were growing two little horns out of your forehead, one on each side. There are a great

SOMETHING HAPPENS

many other pleasures and better ones than living in the stable. Can you embroider?"

"No," answered Cornelli shortly.

"Well, little girls of your age really ought to know how," said the cousin, "but we haven't come here to teach you from the beginning, even how to take a needle in your hand, have we, Betty?"

"It is not necessary for Cornelli to embroider just now," replied the friend, "there are so many pretty books the child can read. We have seen a great number which she has shown us. You would much rather read a beautiful story than be running to the stable, wouldn't you?"

"No, I should not," Cornelli retorted in an unfriendly way.

"We must not attach too much importance to this opinion," said Fräulein Dorner; "when Cornelli is bored she will take up her books. You must really look after Cornelli, Mine, so that such nonsense doesn't occur again as to put on five dresses the same day."

CORNELLI

When supper was ended, Cornelli went up to her room.

Mine followed her.

“ You don’t need to do such stupid things,” she said reprovingly, as soon as the two were on the stairs where their words could no longer be heard. “ I have enough to do already. Now besides I must watch you all day long to see whether you change your dress until you go through them all!”

“ I am not to blame,” replied Cornelli harshly. “ They told me to do so.”

“ She wouldn’t always smell it when you have been in the stable,” Mine went on scolding.

“ Yes, she would smell it,” Cornelli answered back, “ and if she wouldn’t smell it, I have to do so; she told me to change every time that I have been in the stable.”

“ Now she has forbidden you to go into the stable any more, so there will really be an end to this changing your dress,” growled Mine, as she took off the child’s thick winter frock.

SOMETHING HAPPENS

“Now that will have to be cleaned. You make more work than six who are brought up right.”

Mine had never spoken to Cornelli so unkindly. Before this she had done everything to keep the child’s affection, now she appeared to care little about it. Cornelli looked at her in astonishment, but something looked out of her eyes which had never been there before. Mine must have understood it.

“I haven’t done anything to you,” she said quickly. “What I am saying is the truth.” Whereupon she left the room.

“If they all want to treat me so, I will do the same,” exclaimed Cornelli with angry eyes. Suddenly she seized the thick dress she had just taken off and threw it out the window. After some time Mine appeared again in the room. She had brought back the dress. Cornelli was sitting in her petticoat on the window-sill, and looking very grimly down into the courtyard.

“Take care that the wind doesn’t blow you

CORNELLI

down like the dress," said Mine in an unfriendly tone.

"I don't care," replied Cornelli disdainfully, "but the dress did not blow away, I threw it down on purpose."

"So that's what you did? Another time you will bring it back yourself. I promise you that," said Mine and ran away angry.

The following morning after lessons Cornelli, chatting happily, was coming hand in hand with her teacher across the courtyard. During study hours she had forgotten somewhat the trouble of the previous day. Herr Malingер was just as friendly with her as ever; he had not changed.

"Have you a rose for me?" he asked in a pleasant way, as they were passing the rose-bushes in full bloom. Cornelli ran from one bush to another until she had gathered a lovely little bouquet of dark and light, red and white roses. She gave them to her teacher, warning him cautiously not to prick his fingers. Then they said a cordial good-bye.

SOMETHING HAPPENS

Cornelli ran leaping back to the stable. Suddenly she stood still for it occurred to her that she mustn't go in there any more. Now she wouldn't be able to see the little kid any longer and watch its growth. Then she wouldn't know when the time had come when she could harness it and go driving with it. Perhaps she wouldn't be allowed to do that either, but before that, her Papa might be home again, then everything would be different. Cornelli jumped up; the old happiness seemed to be returning. She would go in to see Esther, and talk with her and see how she felt about this whole matter. As Cornelli came into the house her cousin was just coming towards her from the living-room.

"You have come just in time," she said. "I have something to show you. Where were you going now?"

"Into the kitchen," answered Cornelli.

"You have nothing to do in the kitchen. You mustn't go there. I thought you understood that before dinner you must go upstairs and put

CORNELLI

your hair in order. You can do that presently but first come in so that I can tell you what you ought to know."

Cornelli followed her cousin into the room. Fräulein Grideelen was standing at the window. She was really waiting for her friend's return. The cousin led Cornelli to the sofa and pointed to it.

"You must know who did that," she said. "Tell me immediately; you are responsible for it."

On the dark plush upholstery marks of dusty shoe-soles were plainly to be seen. The footprints were nowhere clearly distinguishable in their whole form, but there could be no doubt about it that somebody had walked over it.

"I didn't do that," said Cornelli with flashing eyes.

"Who in the whole house could have done such a thing except you? You must tell yourself, Cornelli! There is no question who did it," said the cousin. "It must be one of your tricks

SOMETHING HAPPENS

like throwing the dress out of the window; I have heard about that, too. I want to say only one thing to you: this is the last time that you, a girl ten years old, can show such bad manners. As long as I am here it must not happen again. You must spare your kind, sensitive father such things as this."

"I did not do it; no, I did not do it, no, no!" screamed Cornelli.

"But Cornelli, just consider. You have grown quite red; you see your conscience is betraying you," Fräulein Grideelen here broke in. "It would be much better if you would say humbly: 'I did it, but I am sorry; I will never do so again.' "

"No, I didn't do it, no, no!" screamed Cornelli still louder, and her cheeks grew still more fiery from anger and excitement.

"Don't make such a scene," commanded the cousin; "one would think some misfortune had come here. It is not worth while to waste so many words. You should not have made the

CORNELLI

matter worse by lying, then it would all have been settled long ago. You have been very naughty and you mustn't do so again. Now you understand."

"No, I have not been naughty, no, no, and I will not say yes, when it is not true," cried Cornelli almost beside herself.

"Now go to your room, Cornelli," said the cousin, "and smooth out your forehead before you come to the table. Your little horns will come completely out if you don't. You can see yourself how repulsive you look, just see in the mirror. If you think there is a single person in the world who would still be pleased and charmed with you with the little black horns in your forehead, you are mistaken. Now go and come back with a different face."

Cornelli went out.

When she had reached her room, Cornelli grasped her forehead with both hands. To be sure on each side of her forehead she could feel something really protruding. Were horns really

SOMETHING HAPPENS

growing out? Cornelli suddenly became terribly frightened at this thought. Now everybody would be able to see them since she could so plainly feel them. Cornelli was horribly excited. Fear, pain, anger and indignation burned in her heart, and blazed higher and higher. She could bear it no longer; she ran out, away up to old Martha.

“No, I didn’t do it, Martha, I never did it,” she screamed, rushing into the little living-room, “and when I say no, no, they ought to believe that I didn’t do it. No, I didn’t do it, never, never. They ought to know it. I haven’t lied, no, I haven’t done that, but they wouldn’t believe it if I said no a hundred times and ——”

“Wait a minute, Cornelli,” said old Martha kindly, “you see you are all out of breath. Come sit down here in your little chair and tell me quietly what has happened to you. You know very well that I believe what you say. I have known you ever since you were little and know that you tell me everything just as it is.”

CORNELLI

Cornelli really could not talk very quietly, but it calmed her somewhat to be able to speak out about what had happened, and to know besides that she would be believed completely. She then told about the complaint which had been made against her and how in spite of all her denials they would not believe her, and now forever and ever would think and declare she had done it and then had lied about it. At this thought Cornelli became crimson again from excitement and was about to break forth once more. But Martha laid a gentle controlling hand on her shoulder.

“No, no, Cornelli, be calm,” she said soothingly. “You see, you have the advantage that it is so and not different. Now you are wrongly accused and cannot prove it, but the dear Lord knows how it is. He has heard everything and now you can be quite peaceful and happy again and can look up to Heaven with a clear conscience and think: the dear Lord knows all about it, I must not be afraid and need not be sad. It

SOMETHING HAPPENS

would be entirely different if you had done wrong and had lied about it. Then you would have been full of anguish all the time and think: 'Now it will be found out,' and when you wanted to look up to Heaven, it would give you pain and sorrow, for you would realize there is One who knows what you have done, from whom you cannot hide it. An unjust accusation doesn't remain with us always; if it stays for a long time, it will at last be removed and at all events, in eternity you will not have to bear it any longer because the dear Lord knows exactly how it is."

Cornelli had really grown calm during this reminder that there was surely One who knew all about it, so she would be able every time her grief came back again to say:

"You know about it, dear Lord. You saw and heard everything."

"If the dear Lord would only tell them as He could really do, then they would know about it at once," said Cornelli.

"It doesn't happen that all could know even

CORNELLI

better than the dear Lord what would be good for us," said Martha, very earnestly shaking her head. "You see, if we could manage it so, everything would be in confusion. We do not see over an hour ahead of us and do not know at any moment what would be good for us, for something happens shortly which we did not expect. Then we would take back at any price what we had desired with all our might the day before, and if we could not and it made us very wretched, it would happen over and over again. But if the dear Lord permits something we do not understand, we can firmly believe that good will come out of it for us. We must only wait and when it presses hard always say for consolation: 'The dear Lord knows what is best.' But we are forgetting the time, Cornelli. I believe you must hurry to go to dinner. It is almost too late already."

Cornelli's face at first so gloomy had brightened completely under Martha's soothing words. Now a deep shadow suddenly came over it.

SOMETHING HAPPENS

“ If only I never had to go home again, Martha, never again, and never had to sit at the table again. I wouldn’t care if I had to starve, if only I could stay with you and never have to go back there again.”

Cornelli looked towards her father’s house and knit her brows as if she saw something terrible.

“ What are you thinking about, Cornelli, to scorn such a beautiful lovely home? What are you thinking about? It is not right,” said Martha kindly reproving her. “ Think how many children have no father’s house. How thankful they would be to the dear Lord for a home such as you have. Go, Cornelli, and be glad that the dear Lord has given you so much and drive away entirely the thoughts which grieve you so! Come back again soon. Then we will have a good time together. There is always something to be glad about.”

Cornelli went away. Really as long as she was with Martha and heard her words she felt there was no reason for her to complain, but as soon as

CORNELLI

she entered the garden and saw the window in the room where she would have to sit at the table everything that had oppressed her heart rose before her. It was really so. Martha did not understand it. She never could be happy again, Cornelli said to herself. She could not go in; she really could not eat. It seemed to her as if she could not swallow any longer, as if there was a big stone in her throat, which she could not get down. If only she would die, that would be the best thing, Cornelli thought, then everything would be over. She sat down on the grass behind the thick currant bushes, where she could not be seen from the house. Meanwhile Mine had carried away the dessert and was placing the fruit on the table.

“It seems Cornelli doesn’t mind coming a full hour late to the table,” said Fräulein Dorner. “Don’t keep anything warm for her; she should learn to be prompt and orderly if that is unfamiliar to her.”

Mine went out, in order to sit down at her

SOMETHING HAPPENS

own table. Esther had already arranged everything; the dessert she had put away in the closet.

“The child shall have that when she comes home,” she said, sitting down also at the table. “She will have enough in every way to swallow, which she has no special taste for.”

“Why can’t she be on time?” remarked Mine sharply. “And she can’t eat all the dessert, so we can very well have our share of it. There is more of it than is good for her.”

“I am not handing out any of it,” said Esther, placing her arms firmly on the table as a sign that she was settled in her seat and would remain seated.

“The child must surely have something to help her swallow what perhaps might stick in her throat,” she continued. “She has more to swallow now than ever in her life before. What went wrong this morning to let loose such a storm in the living-room?”

“It wasn’t worth the trouble to be sure,” re-

CORNELLI

plied Mine; “a couple of light dusty footprints were to be seen on the sofa, and the ladies thought Cornelli had been standing on it. The child would not admit it and the ladies persisted in accusing her until she made a noise as if she were beside herself. It really wasn’t worth noticing.”

“I am almost inclined to think, Mine, you could have explained where the footprints came from,” said Esther with a sly smile. “When you have to wind the clock hanging over the sofa it is quicker to jump up on the sofa than to move away the heavy furniture, and especially early in the morning when you have laced your shoes”—Esther looked straight at the laced boots which Mine had stretched out under the table—“they can’t be taken off quickly. Isn’t that so, Mine?”

“Well, yes, what was there strange about that?” she replied snappishly. “One jump on the sofa would not ruin it, and I have to dust it myself.”

“I only think you could have said a word be-

SOMETHING HAPPENS

fore the ladies choked the child by saying she lied and the child began to scream from indignation at the accusation so that she was heard all through the house and it went to one's very marrow."

"Oh, bah, it wasn't so bad," retorted Mine; "the child has forgotten the whole matter long ago. That is the way with children to make a great to-do, and then go out the door and forget it. For that reason you don't need to give it a thought."

"It used to be different," said Esther smiling. "Then Mine couldn't show enough friendliness to the child. Now the friendliness has turned in another direction, no longer for those of the house."

"Those of the house," repeated Esther scornfully. "It will not be much longer before Esther will sing another tune, when the mistress who is not of the house to-day gives orders in her kitchen."

Esther dropped her spoon.

CORNELLI

“For Heaven’s sake, what are you saying!” she exclaimed. “Who would have thought of such a thing! Which one do you mean? The cousin or the other one?”

“Well, I can’t exactly tell,” replied Mine. “The Director has really not spoken to me about it, but one must be a fool not to notice what is going on and why the ladies had to come. We shall know in time what will happen. That the two came together is the surest sign that it was exactly so it wouldn’t be noticed.”

“Good gracious,” repeated Esther in amazement, “that is a discovery! It must be the cousin, you may be sure; she rules the whole house already. But I shall sing the same tune, Mine, I have sung for twelve years in this house. I shall go on singing no matter who comes here to be the head. You can believe that.”

“Esther, we shall see,” said Mine deliberately, as she rose to go to see if the ladies needed anything more.

Cornelli woke out of a deep sleep; at first she

SOMETHING HAPPENS

did not know at all where she was. She was lying on the grass behind the currant bushes. Then she remembered that she had lain down there when she came from Martha's at noon. Then she had become tired and sleepy. She must have fallen over and gone to sleep. Now it was evening for there was no longer any sunshine in the garden and yet the sky was bright; it was already beginning to grow dusk. A longing such as she had never known before arose in Cornelli; she thought it would be fine to eat everything around her, bush and shrub, leaf and flower, above all the wholly unripe plums on the tree above her. If only she had a piece of bread! Cornelli jumped up and ran to the house.

“Hurry, Cornelli, hurry!” Esther called to her from the open kitchen window. “They are just sitting down to the table. You have come at the right moment.”

Cornelli ran to her room, pulled a large handkerchief out of her things and wound it firmly around her head. Then she ran to the

CORNELLI

dining-room and seated herself quickly in her place.

“ Well, are you here again? ” asked her cousin, who had just sat down at the table. “ A well-behaved little girl would at least say good evening when she comes into the room after a long absence.”

“ Good evening! ” said Cornelli and finished her soup with unusual haste.

“ Where have you come from, after all this time? ” asked her cousin.

“ From the garden,” was the answer.

“ That may well be, but where were you before? ” her cousin wanted to know further.

“ With Martha,” answered Cornelli.

“ If you only would learn to answer a little politely,” remarked the cousin, “ it would be to your own advantage. You have nothing else very taking about you and in that way you might become somewhat more attractive. You really should take pains to become so. When you want to visit this woman again and intend to stay with

SOMETHING HAPPENS

her you should first ask permission, so don't stay away again. I will not say anything further to you to-day although your absence deserves a reprimand. But you look pitiable; have you a toothache?"

"No," Cornelli ejaculated shortly.

"Have you a headache?"

"No."

"What is the matter with you then?"

"Nothing."

"Cornelli, don't masquerade like this again when nothing ails you," said her cousin reprovingly. "Who would wind a handkerchief around her head to look like a clumsy gipsy girl? Don't come to the table with me like that again! Did you ever see anything like it, Betty? Can you understand such a thing from a sensible child?"

The friend shook her head.

"Perhaps Cornelli does so because she is bored; she doesn't care to busy herself with anything useful."

The next morning when Cornelli came to

CORNELLI

breakfast, there was no handkerchief around her head, but still she looked strangely.

“ You look exactly like a New Zealand girl,” said her cousin. “ Do you, perhaps, think you are beautifying your looks by such locks of hair in your face? ”

“ No,” said Cornelli angrily.

“ Neither do I,” said her cousin. “ But there’s no end to your foolishness. What will you press down over your forehead now if your hair is brushed back? ”

“ My fur cap,” answered Cornelli truthfully.

“ Such self-will! ” exclaimed her cousin. “ She is ready at eighty-five degrees temperature to put a fur cap on her head and pull it down over her forehead to her nose if she takes it into her mind. Such a child I have never seen! I don’t know what to make of her.”

Really Cornelli looked as if she had never seen how young European girls combed their hair. She had drawn her thick dark hair from the middle of her head forward onto her forehead

SOMETHING HAPPENS

and far down over it, until her thick uneven locks hung over her brow. Besides they were not hanging loose; on the contrary they were all completely pasted over the skin. The object of this was evidently that it should not move and come away from her forehead.

“ You look disgustingly, Cornelli. Nobody would any longer recognize you if you should go out so. Perhaps this experience would cause you to break your self-will, otherwise there is nothing more to be done with you.”

With these words the cousin rose and left the room. Fräulein Grideelen followed her.

That evening a letter went to the Director. The contents was as follows:

“ *Illerbach, June 20, 18—.*

“ DEAR COUSIN:

“ Everything is going brilliantly in your business; you have an excellent manager. Also in your house and garden and in your stables the best of order reigns, as I can partly see for myself and partly judge through those of the ser-

CORNELLI

vants whom I know to be thoroughly trustworthy. You have a wonderful place, so rich in fruit and flowers and fine vegetables, such as I never thought of when I roamed about in the estate years ago with my friend Cornelia. Now I come to the principal news, which I am sorry to say will not sound so pleasant. Where your child gets her nature I do not understand. There is no trace either of your open, frank disposition or of your Cornelia's always happy, affectionate manner charming everybody. The child has a gloomy unfriendly way, a repellent roughness of manners, and besides such unheard-of obstinacy that words are absolutely useless to manage her. Correction and punishment I leave to you. I shall leave nothing to be done by example and threatening words as long as I am here, and my friend also stands helpfully by me, but I cannot give you any great hopes about the child.

“ Such a self-willed nature will grow more unruly every year. May the success of your undertakings give you the satisfaction which your home life does not offer and which you really deserve.

“ Your devoted cousin,

“ KITTI DORNER.”

CHAPTER V

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

OLD Mathis was raking the gravel path in the garden when Cornelli came out of the house and walked slowly towards him. She had a book in her hand and sat down on the seat under the hazelnut tree, laid the book in her lap and watched Mathis clean the walk. He looked up.

“Come with me, Cornelli; let us go over to the stable. It is a long time since you have been there. You ought to see how the little kid has grown!”

Cornelli shook her head and made no answer. Mathis looked at the child once or twice, but said nothing more.

Then Esther came along with a big basket, on her way to the vegetable garden. “You must have an unusually fine book,” she called to the child, “or you wouldn’t sit so still, that I know.”

Cornelli shook her head.

CORNELLI

“No?” laughed Esther. “Well, come with me, and I will show you how many Mirabellas there are this year; the whole tree is full; they are already turning yellow.”

“I don’t care,” said Cornelli.

“Yes you do! Come along! Such beautiful plums,” called Esther. “And the juicy Magdalens pears are beginning to get ripe too. Won’t you come and see how long it will be?”

“No,” Cornelli called back refusing.

Esther went on her way. A short time later Mathis came near here. “What ails the child, Esther?” he asked. “She is wholly changed. Any one who once knew our Cornelli always so friendly, would never know her now. Why does she have her hair hanging over her face so? You can no longer recognize the child from without or within.”

“I say exactly the same,” replied Esther. “I don’t know what to make of it. You hardly ever see the child and if you meet her she doesn’t say a word. You never hear her singing and laugh-

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

ing as she used to do and she wears such a face all the time that it gives you real pain. How happy the child was formerly! But they say she needs bringing up and it is possible, but since she has had the bringing up she is so altered and not for the better. Perhaps she will improve later on, when her bringing up is finished."

"She needs her mother," said Mathis. "It is a pity when such a little one has to grow up without a mother; she needs her at every step. How safe one is who can go to a mother with every joy and sorrow."

"One would think you were still running to your mother when anybody does something to you, Mathis," said Esther a little sarcastically.

"I would do that gladly enough," asserted Mathis. "I know what I have had in my mother, and I am sorry for every child that hasn't any, and even when it has so much wealth besides. You can see in our master's child how much all the wealth helps her when she is without a mother."

CORNELLI

Mathis went away, but he looked once more pityingly towards the bench. Cornelli was still sitting there motionless; the book lay on the ground.

Then Herr Malingер came into the garden. He was coming up to the house; Cornelli went towards him.

“ I could not come to-day at nine o’clock,” he said, “ but an hour is better than nothing, so I have come now at eleven o’clock. I hope you have spent your two hours this morning pleasantly and usefully.”

“ No, I haven’t done that,” said Cornelli bluntly.

“ But you have a beautiful book in your hand, which must contain something fine. What is it about? ”

“ I don’t know,” replied Cornelli.

“ Come, let us get to work. It doesn’t seem to me that your reading has made a particularly deep impression on you. Let us hope for a more lively effect from our lesson hour.”

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

The teacher went with his pupil into the house.

“It seems to me, Cornelli,” he said, when she had seated herself in her place, “that your hair comes a little uncomfortably into your face; couldn’t you make a little change in it?”

“No, I could not, not at all and never again,” said Cornelli vehemently and pressed her hair firmly against her forehead with both hands.

“Well, well, that is really not my affair,” said her teacher pacifyingly. “It only seemed to me a somewhat disfiguring hair-dressing, and besides I think you would look better without those weeping-willow like pendants.”

Cornelli kept on pressing both hands to her forehead, as if her teacher might try forcibly to arrange her hair. But he then went quite peacefully to his teaching.

After the ladies had left the table, the cousin said:

“Now, Cornelli, you are not to run away again immediately; you must really begin an orderly life! After you have finished your lessons, read

CORNELLI

a nice book; you have so many of them. You have time enough for running about and visiting after coffee."

As usual the lessons were quickly finished. Then Cornelli seated herself with her book on the bench in the garden, just as she had done in the morning, laid it sometimes in her lap and sometimes it fell on the grass, and meanwhile Cornelli looked at the trees and on the ground. But she did not seem to see anything really before her. At coffee time Cornelli seated herself punctually at the table, quickly swallowed what was given to her, as if it were medicine which had to be taken. Then she sat motionless with knitted brows, for she had to stay at the table until the ladies rose. The cousin had taught her this good custom.

"Don't make such horns all the time, they can really be seen through your hair, you wrinkle your forehead so badly," said Fräulein Dorner. "It won't be much longer before you can go."

Then the ladies rose to go out into the gar-

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

den. Cornelli crept along behind them, turned unnoticed around the corner of the house and went straight across the field to the road.

“To sit under the hazelnut tree and read a beautiful book is really a pleasure that not all children have,” said the cousin, sitting down on the bench; “you have therefore every reason to look happy and thankful instead of wrinkling your forehead continually and pouting, Cornelli — Why, where has she gone again already?” the cousin broke off looking around her.

“She disappeared immediately after coming out of the house,” replied her friend. “Cornelli is really a strange child, no friendly word, no sign of childish affection does she give. As soon as she can she runs away. I have never come across such a child before.”

“I am only sorry on account of her father, who would so much enjoy a pleasant home-life,” continued Fräulein Dorner. “Such a life will never bloom beside this only daughter, who will grow more stubborn and unlovely every day; all

CORNELLI

the members of the house feel this, as Mine says. How will it look here in two or three years and how will it be to live here? My poor cousin with his beautiful estate! What does he get by it?"

"In two years much can happen, Kitti, that cannot be foreseen, and that would change a whole house," replied her friend. "Let us hope that this truth may be verified to your cousin for his best good."

Cornelli no longer went jumping about. She crept along by the side of the road, looking before her on the ground without once glancing up, although all the birds were singing merrily above her in the trees, and right and left the meadows were full of red daisies and blue forget-me-nots, which Cornelli usually ran after more than all the other flowers.

Martha saw the child coming so. She came out with a troubled face.

"What is the matter, Cornelli?" she asked sympathetically. "Can't you be happy again?"

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

“No, I never can be any more,” answered Cornelli, as she stepped into Martha’s room and sat down in the little chair she had placed for her. Cornelli no longer threw out her words fast and angrily as she had done before. With a deep sigh she said:

“Oh, if only I had never learned to read!”

“Why, why, Cornelli, what are you thinking about?” exclaimed Martha. “That is surely not right. You ought to know once what it is when you have to read something through and cannot make it out and you begin over and over again and it is not made clear. It happened to me exactly so to-day; you must really help me so I can understand it. How many times I have thought, if only I could read and write as fast as our Cornelli. It is a real good fortune to be able to read and write without any hindrance. Any one who cannot, knows that very well. And then you surely have beautiful books most of which your father has given you.”

“Yes, they are beautiful, but tiresome, you

CORNELLI

can believe, Martha," asserted Cornelli. "They are nothing but histories, descriptions of celebrated men and discoveries, and Papa says he liked to read the books very much when he was young, but perhaps he was different from me. Now I must never run about any more, and never go in the stable any more, and never run up in the woods where I want to; I must always sit here and read a book. Oh, if only nobody had ever written a book, then nobody would have to read one."

"Well, you see, Cornelli, perhaps everybody would not agree with you," said Martha, "but now you must help me read my letter, which I received to-day, then you will see what an advantage it is to be able to read well. I have to ask your help in order to understand just what is wanted of me."

Cornelli took the offered letter very willingly in her hand in order to help Martha.

"Who has written to you?" the child asked.

"That is exactly what I cannot read," replied

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

the old woman; “ only that he is coming from the city, that I have seen, but who could have written to me from the city I cannot guess.”

Cornelli began to read the letter. It inquired if the advertised room was not yet occupied and if Frau Martha would take a boy of twelve years for a few weeks. He would not require any special care, as he was not sick, but only not very strong. Good air and fresh milk every day were the principal things desired for him. If no refusal came, the boy would appear the middle of July. “ Nika Halm, Pastor’s widow,” was the signature.

“ You see how it runs as of itself!” said Martha in amazement, when Cornelli had finished reading. “ I never could have made it out so. Think, that a pastor’s widow will bring her son to me to board. I will surely look after him and take good care of him. I must ask Mathis if he can give me milk from the cow, morning and evening. Now it is a shame that it isn’t a girl, so you would have a playmate. But you will

CORNELLI

surely amuse each other. Aren't you a little pleased that he is coming?"

"No, not a little bit," replied Cornelli shortly. "I know already that he will have nothing to do with me, and I know why too. It is all the same to me whether he is a boy or a girl, I will have nothing to do with him either."

"You weren't like this before, Cornelli, you were friendly and pleasant with everybody; what has come over you?" asked Martha a little troubled. "You don't look around with such bright eyes; I think your hair comes down a little too far. Shall I brush it back a little for you?"

Martha brought a comb and wanted to use it.

"No, let it be, Martha, it must be so," objected Cornelli, "and it must always stay so all my life long."

"I really don't believe that; it is too bad to have it so; your face is half covered and one could hardly recognize you," said Martha regretfully. "What do the ladies say about it?"

"Fräulein Dorner is cross with me and says

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

I am the most obstinate creature in the whole world, and nobody can manage me any more," stated Cornelli according to the truth, "and no child in the world looks so hateful as I do and nobody will ever like me. And I know very well that it is so," added Cornelli. "I would rather not have anybody come to you, so I could always come to see you and be alone with you."

"But I think, Cornelli, if you would do what the ladies want you to, you would be doing right," said Martha, "and then they would really like you, and everybody else too."

"No, no, you don't know how it is, Martha," said Cornelli distressed. "I will do every other thing they tell me to, but I cannot brush back my hair, or else it would be much worse, everybody would see it."

Martha shook her head.

"I don't know what you mean, but come to see me, Cornelli, as you have always come. Whoever else is with me, you are always the dearest, and if you wouldn't come any more it

CORNELLI

would hurt my feelings so that I would rather not have anybody take my room, although I should be so very glad to have the pastor's son with me."

"Well, then I will come again, Martha," promised Cornelli. "We could stay alone together in the kitchen. I only want to be alone with you. Monday I will not come as they are coming then, but on Tuesday I will come and then you must stay out in the kitchen, Martha."

Martha promised to do this, and Cornelli went on her way back just as she had come; not a single time did she run after the blue forget-me-nots, or the other flowers brightening the meadow beyond.

When Monday came she wondered a little if a carriage with a proud city boy and a lady wearing a high hat with feathers sitting inside would arrive, and they would look scornfully down on her. Cornelli stationed herself by the garden wall, where she could easily overlook the road. No carriage came either in the morning or the

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

afternoon when she had more time for watching. Cornelli was glad that nobody had come.

The following day as soon as the time came, when she was allowed to go out, she strolled over to Martha's little house.

“It is a good thing they did not come, so I can be alone with you once more and not have to go in the kitchen.”

Cornelli had spoken as she was entering; suddenly she stood still. Inside a strange boy was sitting at the table; Martha was just clearing away the supper. So he had come and also had heard how glad she would have been if she had not found him there. The boy laughed aloud, and Cornelli was about to withdraw quickly.

“No, no, come in and let us get acquainted,” he called to her. “Just come in. Frau Martha has already told me about you,” he continued, as Cornelli hesitated about entering. “If you would rather be with her alone, I can go up to my room.”

This was good that he wanted to make room

CORNELLI

for her and was not vexed at her words. She stepped in. Martha greeted her with her usual cordiality; she had already brought out her little chair for her.

“I have been expecting you, Cornelli,” she said. “Come and sit down a little while with our guest. His name is Dino Halm; he knows your name already. You will surely have a good time together. I am going upstairs for a little while. If you need anything, you can easily find me, Cornelli, up in my room.”

Martha thought the new acquaintance would get on better if she left the two alone. Besides she could use the time for quickly unpacking the newcomer’s things, and arranging them nicely in his closet and drawers, so that he might feel perfectly at home in his neatly ordered room.

“Why did you think we had not come?” asked Dino, when Martha had left the room, and Cornelli sat silently before him.

“Because I did not see the carriage,” she answered.

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

“ The carriage? Well, I surely believe that,” said Dino. “ For more than an hour, really almost two hours we had to go on foot from the train here. Do you ride in a carriage when you want to go to the train? ”

“ Yes, I drive there with Papa,” answered Cornelli.

“ Where do the horses come from to get here at once? ” Dino inquired.

“ From the stable,” was the answer.

“ Have you your own stable then and two of your own horses in it just to drive out with? ” asked Dino further in astonishment.

“ Yes, there are the two bay ones, and we have to have the six others to carry away the iron, you know, from the iron-works over there.”

“ Good gracious! You have eight horses! ” exclaimed Dino. “ You are well off to be able to sit with your Papa like that and drive away! ”

“ Can’t you do so? ” asked Cornelli then.

“ No, certainly not, never in all my life,” answered Dino decidedly. “ For one thing I have

CORNELLI

no Papa any longer, then we have no stable and horses still less. You are certainly very well off! Is there anything else in the stable?"

"Yes, much more, six cows and a big gray stable cat," stated Cornelli, "and an old goat and a young snow-white kid. I tied a red ribbon around its neck, and you must have milk from the cows."

"Oh, I should like that very much," exclaimed Dino. "May I go to the stable and see the horses there?"

"Yes, surely you can do that. Mathis will be glad to show them to you and Martha will let you go soon. If only I could go with you!"

Cornelli had to sigh deeply.

"Of course you can go, if the stable belongs to you, nobody could prevent you," said Dino decidedly. "And do you know what we could do? We could harness the young kid to a little wagon, it would look so pretty. It could draw you and I could be the driver. I saw a little team like that once on our promenade."

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

Cornelli had really had this thought too, but she could no longer go to the stable, and now it suddenly occurred to her that she was not allowed to run about as formerly. She made no further answer. Only a deep sigh escaped her, even deeper than the first.

“Why do you sigh so, as if you had to carry a mountain and could hardly stir again?” asked Dino.

“I can’t tell you about that, nor to any person. You couldn’t either if you had what I have,” answered Cornelli.

“Really I could; there’s nothing in the world I couldn’t tell about,” asserted Dino. “When there is something you can’t tell to anybody else, you can tell your mother, then everything comes right again. So go now and tell her, then you will feel easy immediately and everything will be right again.”

“Well, now I can tell you that you are very well off and much better than I am,” said Cornelli excited. “I cannot go to my mother be-

CORNELLI

cause I haven't any mother. Now you see how well off I am. You wouldn't change places with me, would you?"

Dino looked very much shocked.

"I didn't know at all that you hadn't any mother," he said full of sympathy, for he at once saw his own mother before him, as she looked at him so affectionately and made his heart light when anything troubled him. Cornelli must miss that very much.

The stable and the horses and the big garden with the abundance of fruit, about which Martha had already told him, appeared to him in a very different light than before. He was genuinely sorry for her.

"No, I would not change places with you," he said decidedly.

Then a great sympathy arose in Dino's heart for the child who had no mother; he would have to look after her a little. Now he could understand, too, why Cornelli looked so strange, which had struck him at once as she came in. There

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

was no mother to regulate everything as it ought to be.

“ Do you know, Cornelli,” he began again, “ we are going to be good friends together. But first of all I want to advise you to brush your hair away from your forehead. I can’t see your eyes well for one thing. Nobody does so. What have you fastened it with, that it stays over your whole forehead and doesn’t fly away, long as it is?”

“ With mucilage,” answered Cornelli.

“ Shocking! Come, I will cut away all that sticks there, then your forehead and eyes will be free. You can hardly see.”

Dino had already taken up the scissors, lying with Martha’s patchwork, but Cornelli warded him off with both hands and screamed aloud:

“ Let it be! It must stay so! Put away the scissors!”

“ I will not hurt you, really, only don’t scream so,” said Dino calmly, while he laid down the scissors again. “ On the contrary I wanted to do you a kindness. You see if my sisters should

CORNELLI

see you, Nika and Agnes, they would laugh; they would not be at all pleased with the way you stick down your hair."

"I know well enough they don't need to see me at all," said Cornelli in a hoarse voice. "Nobody needs to see me. I know already nobody likes me. I don't care."

Suddenly Cornelli ran away. Dino looked in the greatest astonishment towards the door behind which the child had just disappeared without any warning and without saying good-bye.

When Martha came back to the living-room and looked surprised at Cornelli's empty chair, Dino said:

"That is a queer child. I didn't think she would be so unfriendly."

Then he told her how they had talked and then how Cornelli had suddenly run out the door without any leave-taking; he had not intended any harm. Martha shook her head.

"Cornelli never was like this before," she said. "I am troubled about the girl, she is so altered.

AN ARRIVAL IN ILLERBACH

You must not think she is a strange child, or one who gets cross every minute and runs away. She is not so; it is something quite new in her. Oh, if only I could hear my Cornelli laugh and sing again, as she used to do! I thought with such a good companion as you would be for her, her old happiness would come back. But it may yet come. To-day was the first day of your acquaintance."

"Cornelli will surely never come to see me again," said Dino a little puzzled. "She ran away as if she was angry or vexed."

Although Cornelli had called out, "I don't care!" she could not really have felt so. When she reached the house, she crept immediately to her room, sat down on a footstool, and with her head laid in both hands began to cry very bitterly.

CHAPTER VI

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

CORNELLI did not appear at Martha's again for several days. Martha was very much troubled about it for many reasons which equally disturbed her. For one thing, the child was as dear to her as if she had been her own and she could hardly do without her usual daily visits. Then she knew there must be something wrong with Cornelli not to appear any longer, for ever since she was a little girl she had never let a day pass without running in to tell her old Martha everything that had happened and was going to happen. Then besides, Martha felt sorry on account of her guest, that Cornelli stayed away so long. She had already told Dino so much about the child; how merry and entertaining she was, and how Dino would find a daily playmate in her. And now it was not all so; Cornelli no longer came.

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

Meanwhile Dino had become good friends with old Martha, who did not know in the least what she was going to do, to make such a friendly and polite boarder comfortable in her house. When he had taken his daily walk and done his appointed school work, which he undertook very intelligently, Dino was always glad to sit down with Martha, to listen to all her stories which she told in a very pleasing way. She usually told him then about the Director and his wife, whom she had known when she was a little child, and always began soon to talk about Cornelli, about whom she had the most to relate. She had never known such a happy, merry, entertaining child, Martha declared every time, again and again, although Dino always said he couldn't understand it. And when Martha insisted that Cornelli was about the most good-natured child she had ever seen, then Dino had to laugh every time.

“She looks exactly like a little owl,” he said again and again. “You can hardly see her eyes. But I wish she would come once more,” he then

CORNELLI

added, for he wondered very much what Cornelli would be like if she was so merry and amusing as Martha had always seen her.

That same evening, when Dino had gone to his room old Martha quickly tied on a better apron, took a big scarf out of her closet, threw it over her shoulders and stepped softly out of the house. Then she went to the Director's house. Pausing she looked up at the kitchen window. There was still a bright light to be seen as well as in the room looking out on the garden. Martha went into the kitchen. Esther and Mine were sitting there at a bountiful supper. Mine rose and answered the bell, which had rung from the dining-room. Esther invited her old friend immediately to take the vacant seat.

“ Sit down, Martha, you deserve to take a rest to-day as well as I,” she said, as she moved three dishes and a bottle and lifted them towards the visitor. “ Take it, take some. There is so much left over, I am always glad when it is gone, so I can have a fresh table for the next day.”

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

“I thank you many times, Esther, I have already had my supper,” replied Martha. “It is very friendly of you to want to let me eat with you, but no, thank you.”

“What, thank you, that’s nothing, I thank you! What I have cooked any one can eat, and if it was the Emperor of Russia and you are not that yet,” said Esther somewhat put out, as she filled a plate with a fine piece of roast meat, macaroni and cooked plums.

“There, Martha, make no objection, eat that and drink a glass of wine besides. I don’t know why not. You can eat twice at night. I don’t know why not, if it is good.”

Martha did not want to refuse Esther’s fine offering; she began thanking her a second time for the much more abundant supper than her first had been.

“What has happened, Martha, that you have come here so late?” then asked Esther a little curious to know what her visit at such an unusual time could mean.

CORNELLI

“ I wanted to ask you something, Esther, and thought at this time in the evening I should least disturb you in your work,” answered Martha. “ Cornelli has not been to see me all this week, and the child usually comes every day. I thought perhaps the ladies did not like to have her go to such a humble old woman, and I could easily understand that; do you think it is so? ”

“ No, I don’t think so at all,” replied Esther. “ They know from Mine that the master likes you very much; but you can’t think how the child has changed in all her actions; you can’t recognize her any longer. Who used to come early every morning three and four times running into the kitchen? Who sang and jumped around in the garden like a bird, morning and night and all through the day? Who picked all the finest berries and yellow plums and the juicy, deep red, tart cherries from the young cherry-tree, so that it was a pleasure to see her? Cornelli did all that. And now? Nothing doing.

“ The berries have dried up long ago and rot-

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

ted, and so have the beautiful tart cherries. The golden Mirabellas, such wonderful plums, are lying by the dozen under the tree, for they are all for children. Naturally the ladies don't care for such things, and they are not good for cooking. So they lie where they fall and Cornelli goes past them all and doesn't raise her head."

Martha was much too modest to say how glad she would be to take a little basket full of the fine plums to her guest, for she had no fruit at all for him, and how good it would taste to him! But he was now with her, and she would be speaking for herself, which she could not do.

"Yes, Esther," she then said, "I have really noticed how different Cornelli is. God grant she may be better soon. The child has to get used to a new life, but it is a good thing for her that some one is here who will manage her education as it should be for such a child."

Esther shrugged her shoulders significantly. She said nothing.

"Is Cornelli in her room in the house or has

CORNELLI

she gone out, Esther, do you know? I should like to tell her she must come to see me again, since you say the ladies have nothing against it."

Esther did not need to answer. At that very moment Cornelli came creeping through the corridor. When she noticed Martha, stepping out the door, a friendly look lighted up her face, and she came quickly along to greet the old woman.

"I came to see if perhaps you were sick, or if there was anything to prevent you from coming to see me any more," said Martha, still holding Cornelli's hand fast in an affectionate way. "It has seemed such a long time since you were with me."

"To me too," said Cornelli in a hoarse voice.

"So come again soon, to-morrow and every day, as you used to do," requested Martha.

"No, I am not coming," answered Cornelli.

"But why not, Cornelli?" asked Martha with concern.

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

“ Because the boy is there. I cannot bear him and he can’t bear me either,” stated Cornelli.

Martha was very much agitated over this mistake. She told Cornelli how, on the contrary, Dino had asked for her every day, and would be so glad if she would come again. He really had no playmate and to stay alone all day was very tiresome for him. He was certainly not to blame that Cornelli could not bear him; he did not feel so towards her, or else he would not wish so much to have her come again.

“ And just tell me, Cornelli,” concluded Martha, “ why you can’t bear friendly Dino? ”

“ Well, I will come again to-morrow,” was Cornelli’s answer. This satisfied Martha. She then went away very much delighted, but she made the child promise once more to come the next day to stay a little while with her old friend and her new boarder.

Cornelli went to Martha’s house the next day promptly at the usual time towards evening. Martha was standing by her carnations on the

CORNELLI

little balcony and awaiting her visitor, for she had already seen her coming along.

“Dino is glad you have come, Cornelli,” said Martha holding out her hand to the child. “He is just returning home from drinking his milk; see there he comes now.”

Dino had heard that the expected visitor had arrived; he had opened the door and now stepped out.

“Why haven’t you been here for such a long time?” he asked, holding out his hand to Cornelli. “I have been expecting you every day.”

Cornelli did not answer. She went with him into the living-room and sat down by the table as she had done the first day of their being together. Martha went out. She knew well that the children would get on together best if they were alone, and she wished that they would become very good friends.

“Your white kid grows prettier every day,” said Dino. “It still wears the red ribbon and

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

jumps about so gaily, you ought to see it just once."

"I don't care whether I see it again or not, it is all the same to me," Cornelli retorted in an unfriendly way.

"No, that is not true," said Dino laughing pleasantly. "When you say such a thing and in such a tone it is the same as if you cared. You are bitter now because you can't go there. I know that very well; I do the same."

Cornelli was so astonished at Dino's knowledge of the situation that she stared at him in silence.

"Yes, I know quite well how it is," he repeated, "but you have no reason to be bitter. You have the most beautiful life one can have. Every morning and every evening I think so, when I go to the stable for the milk and see over in the garden the wonderful fruit, one tree quite full of golden plums, and all the berries on the bushes. And then in the stables two handsome horses standing apart from the others, and

CORNELLI

Mathis tells me your father takes you driving every week with him, and you could have everything in the garden and everywhere around, because you are the only child in the house."

"Yes, if only there were twelve or twenty children in the house, it would be very different," Cornelli burst out violently, "but I am all alone and can't say a word to anybody, and when everybody hates you and scorns you and nobody in the world can help you, and it grows worse and worse—you don't know at all how it is. I would rather die right away —" Here Cornelli suddenly burst into tears. She laid her head on the table and sobbed.

Dino looked quite frightened; he had not wanted to make Cornelli sad, but he did not in the least understand what she said about hating and scorning, but it occurred to him that she had no mother, which was something so sad he could understand Cornelli's tears. That was really something to weep about, much more than that she was the only child. This thought aroused his

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

sympathy so much for the weeping girl that he said in a very tender voice:

“Come, Cornelli, it is really frightfully sad that you have no mother, but yet you must not think that you are so alone that nobody will help you. You see I am going to be your friend and will help you, but you must tell me truly what makes you feel so bad. I don’t know about it and don’t understand what you said. You must explain it to me quite clearly.”

“I cannot do that to anybody,” sobbed Cornelli.

“Really and truly you can; just come and don’t cry any more and tell me everything, then I can surely help you. I will truly find a way. Come, tell me about it.”

Dino took Cornelli’s hand and drew it gently away from her eyes.

“No, no, I cannot,” she said full of distress.

“Yes, indeed you can. Come, I will first brush away your hair. It is stuck fast again to your forehead and over your eyes. You can’t see so.”

CORNELLI

Dino brushed the hanging, clinging hair as far aside as he could.

“Now you can see, now you will see how it is and make a great time over it!” exclaimed Cornelli despairingly.

“I don’t see anything except that you look a thousand times better than with that thick fringe hanging down over your face,” said Dino.

“No, let it be. I know perfectly well how it is,” screamed Cornelli, while she tried to draw her hair back again. “You only say so because you want to be my friend, but I know about it very well and everybody will see it and hate me.”

“Is that why you are crying?” asked Dino very much astonished. “But I don’t know what you mean. You surely imagine something that nobody sees. People often do that.”

“No, I don’t do that, and there really are people who see it. I know that very well. You mustn’t think I am inventing something, for then I should not be so distressed that often I can’t

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

go to sleep for a long, long time and have to keep thinking that it is growing worse and worse and finally it can't be covered up any longer, and then there will be nobody who will not hate me when they see me, and you will too, I know perfectly well."

"Now I am going to swear to you right away that I will not hate you, no matter what comes in sight," exclaimed Dino with great eagerness. "Only just tell me what you mean. If you do I can perhaps help you or give you some good advice, only tell me now—you know that I will be your friend no matter what comes in sight."

Cornelli hesitated.

"But later on if it is quite different, will you still be my friend, when nobody else is my friend?" she asked urgently.

"Yes, I promise you and give you my hand on it," said Dino, and followed his words with a firm hand-grasp. "There now you see that is true, for whatever is promised with the hand can

CORNELLI

never be taken back. Now you can be sure I will be your friend for always."

Cornelli's face lighted up with pleasure for now she had a friend for all time, whatever should happen. This was evidently a great consolation to her.

"Then I will tell you what it is, but you must promise me that you will never tell anybody in the whole world about it, never, so long as you live."

Dino promised again and gave her his hand.

"You see here," Cornelli then said a little hesitatingly, pushing her hair away from her face, "here on both sides of my forehead I have big humps, and they keep growing all the time, and every time I make up a face and scowl they grow much more than usual. But I have to make up a face almost all the time, because I cannot be happy any more and never laugh any more. And so the humps grow higher every day and finally they will be like horns and everybody will detest me because nobody has such things. And I can

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

do nothing but hide them, but at last they will grow out so that I can't cover them any longer with my hair, then everybody will see them and hate me and all the children will surely throw stones at me. Oh!"

Cornelli laid her head again on her arms and groaned in her great distress. Dino had listened in great astonishment; he had never heard anything like it.

"But, Cornelli, why do you scowl then, if it makes the humps grow bigger and bigger? It would be much better if you would think about jolly things and laugh and make up a happy face, then perhaps they would go away."

"I can't! I never can again," wailed Cornelli. "I really know I make up ugly faces and am so hateful that nobody wants to look at me. That is why I have to frown all the more, when any one looks at me, because I know they think at once that I am hideous. And I can never be happy and laugh any more because I always have to think the terrible things on my head keep

CORNELLI

growing worse and worse and I can do nothing, nothing at all! You don't know how it is. As long as I live I shall have to be so and disliked by everybody. You couldn't laugh any more if you were like that, I know."

"You see, you must think about something entirely different, then you will forget this whole matter and it will no longer seem to you as it does now. You are always thinking about the same thing, so you naturally believe it more and more. Let it all go, then it will surely be better again," said Dino, who did not exactly know what the matter was. "Come, I will tell you a story that will bring you other thoughts. Once there was an old copper pan—you see, you have laughed already!"

"Yes, that must be a fine story about an old copper pan!" exclaimed Cornelli.

"Yes, really, it is a lovely story," asserted Dino, "only listen: She had a stepbrother, he was a wash-boiler—now you have laughed again already, you see! That is right.—Then they

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

went together to Paris, where there was a revolution."

"What is a revolution?" asked Cornelli eagerly.

"You see how the story interests you," said Dino delighted. "You have hardly any more wrinkles in your forehead, because you are so attentive; haven't I advised you well what to do? Now I will go on farther: a revolution is when no one any longer stays in the place where he belongs, and everything is out of joint."

"Yes, out of joint," Cornelli broke in skeptically. "That is when glue is needed to fasten the legs of the chairs when they get loose."

"Exactly," agreed Dino. "You see when all law and order begins to weaken like the chairs when they need glue, then everything falls apart and tumbles to pieces, and everything is out of joint, do you understand?"

"Yes, what happened next?" inquired Cornelli.

"That pleased both travellers very much,"

CORNELLI

continued Dino, “ for they both had discontented thoughts within them. The copper pan had been thinking for a long time she would rather be something else and not always cooking fat things and having smoke under her; she could really be something better. The wash-boiler had similar ideas. He thought he could be as fine a teakettle as any other and so stand on a gentleman’s table and not in the laundry. So both joined the revolution and took part in it. Then they came to be very prominent and spoke much in public for they both could talk very well. The wash-boiler had learned how from the wash-woman and the copper pan from the cook. Then they were asked what places they would like to take. The copper pan wanted to be an ice chest, which glistened outside from the beautiful wood and inside from the splendid ice. And the wash-boiler chose to be a teakettle and stand on a gentleman’s table. So they both became what they wished to be. But the copper pan was used to the comfortable fire and when filled with the freezing

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

ice she began to shiver so terribly and to shake so, that continually chattering her teeth she looked around to see if she could spy a little fire. But never a speck was brought near her, and besides she suffered such intolerable hunger for she had other food taken to her, instead of the fattest morsels being stewed in her. Now she could suck the pieces of ice, nothing more. She could no longer enjoy everything so shining around her since she always had to think how terrible freezing and hunger are.

“ Meanwhile the teakettle was standing on a beautifully laid table. Many finely dressed young ladies and gentlemen sat around the table and ate out of the very fine cups and plates with golden rims. This flattered the teakettle and he said to himself: ‘ Now I can associate with them all.’ Then one of the ladies said: ‘ I smell soap. I believe it comes from the teakettle; what does it mean?’ Then her neighbor laughed and said: ‘ I have noticed something of the kind for a long time. Let us hope that it hasn’t been used

CORNELLI

for washing stockings.' Then they all looked at the teakettle and sniffed and wrinkled their noses scornfully. Then the teakettle lost his security for he knew very well how many hundred pairs of stockings had been washed in him, but he had no suspicion that the smell of soap was still clinging to his new shape. He felt very confined and close in the company and could think of nothing but how he could run away and go back home, where he had been so well off and where everybody had respected him, for he had been a very excellent wash-boiler.

"Then the revolution suddenly ended. So the lady of the house said where the ice-box was standing: 'I no longer want this disgusting ice-box which you forced upon me during the revolution in exchange for my good old refrigerator. All the ice that comes out of it tastes of onion soup. The copper pan had always furnished such soup particularly tasty. Lulu, throw it out with the old iron.' Then Lulu the man, and Lala the maid, took hold of the ice-box on both sides and

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

with frightful strength flung it down on the heap of old iron, bones and sweepings lying in the back yard, and they flung it so forcibly that everything in the ice-box cracked. When the former copper pan felt all her joints falling apart and everything coming to a sad end she groaned: 'Oh, if only I had never gone to the revolution! Oh, if I were only at home over my comfortable coal fire! Oh, if only I had never —' then she broke all to pieces.

"That same day the young lady on whose table the teakettle was standing, said: 'Now I have had enough of this soap-boiler. I will have a real teakettle and not an imitation one; away with it!' Then the man-servant seized the teakettle and dashed it down on the scrap heap in the back yard. It was exactly the same back yard where his stepsister had been thrown, and the stepbrother was broken all to pieces and it finished her too.

"Then he screamed with pain: 'Oh, if only I had never gone to the revolution! Oh, if I were

CORNELLI

at home again in my peaceful steaming laundry.' Then he was completely crushed to pieces by the old revolution guns which had been thrown down there from above. Now the story is ended."

"Yes, they were right. They shouldn't have gone to the revolution," said Cornelli sympathetically.

"Yes, and I am right too," exclaimed Dino triumphantly. "You see, Cornelli, how that has helped you so that you couldn't think any more about your queer story of the humps. You haven't a single wrinkle left in your forehead and you have brushed back all your hair. You are like a different girl. I shouldn't know you any longer."

Really in her eagerness to hear the story and not lose a word of it, Cornelli had pushed all her overhanging locks to one side, for they annoyed her very much getting in her eyes, and because she was not thinking at all why she had to have them hanging down, she had brushed them away

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

with a swift motion from her forehead and her whole face had grown bright from the exciting story.

“Come, see yourself how you look,” challenged Dino while he took the little mirror down from the wall and held it in front of Cornelli.

“No, I don’t want to see how I look,” she screamed, and immediately she drew all her hair again far down over her face into her eyes, and her forehead was furrowed with wrinkles.

“Don’t do like that,” said Dino, hanging up the mirror again. “I am only glad that I now know a way to help you. I will keep on doing so, and you must come every day, promise me that, then you will see how you will forget everything that troubles you and finally you will not think about it at all and will be quite happy again.”

Cornelli shook her head. “No, I don’t believe so,” she said. “You cannot prevent it from growing worse and worse,” she said, drawing a little more hair over her face. But she gave Dino her hand as a promise. She had enjoyed being

CORNELLI

with him so much that she would be very glad to come again.

Every day now Cornelli strolled over to Martha's house and Martha wept for joy when she heard Cornelli's happy laughter in her little living-room after so long a time, for she had been greatly troubled in her heart, because the child formerly so happy had so entirely changed. She preferred to leave the children alone together, for then they talked continually in the liveliest way. Then from time to time she would hear a laughter that delighted her heart and Martha thought this should not be disturbed or interrupted in any way. She had carefully noticed how it was with Cornelli. She could listen to a new story from Dino with enthusiastic interest as if she were experiencing it all herself, and in her burning eagerness would throw back all her hair, her eyes would sparkle as they did formerly and a bright laughing face would look up at the story-teller. Everything else was forgotten. But if Cornelli happened to recall at any time anything about her

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

own life and personality all the sunshine would suddenly disappear from her face, her forehead would wrinkle, and the objectionable locks would hang far down into her eyes again.

So Martha tried to leave the children as undisturbed as possible while they entertained each other; she hoped so much for Cornelli from this daily association with the happy comrade, on whose sunny brow no wrinkle was to be seen, and who could so quickly dispel the shadows from Cornelli's face. But as soon as Cornelli had left the house and gone to her garden, everything returned to the old condition, and Martha, who watched the child carefully every time, could easily see how the terrible locks of hair were pulled over the dear girl's face again. Then she sighed deeply and said to herself: "It is like some sickness; who can really help her! Oh, if our dear lady sees her only beloved child so disfigured!"

Cornelli was astonished that it was already Saturday again; the two last weeks had passed so quickly.

CORNELLI

She ran through the garden. Under the plum-tree lay the last wonderful ripe deep golden Mirabellas. Cornelli picked them up, they were so handsome to look at, but this year she could find no pleasure in them. She took the fruit with her and laid it on the table when she reached Martha's house.

"Oh, what lovely, golden yellow plums; they really taste like pure honey!" exclaimed Dino. "They are from the tree in your garden. When the sun shines on it in the morning, it glistens on all the branches red golden, like a Christmas tree."

"Yes, they are from that tree. Will you eat them?" asked Cornelli.

"Yes, gladly, but you must share them," said Dino.

"No, I don't care to," answered Cornelli. "Try and see if they are good. If you don't like them, let them be. The birds can have them."

"Oh, there is nothing that tastes so sweet and bitter at the same time as these golden plums!"

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

exclaimed Dino, as he ate with enjoyment one after another of the sun-cooked plums.

“What a shame that I didn’t know how you like them; you ought to have told me,” said Cornelli. “Now there are no more on the tree; these are the last, which were lying in the grass. But you know now the rose pears are coming and they are good too, even better. I will bring you some of those every day.”

“Yes, that would be fine to bring me a feast of pears every day,” said Dino, admiring the last rosy plum before it would be devoured, “but you have well spoken, Cornelli. You will stay under the lovely pear-tree and I have to go away to crouch behind the schoolhouse walls again and be sorry.”

“You are not going away yet,” said Cornelli alarmed.

It had never occurred to her that this companionship could have an end.

“Yes, indeed, I have to go, or else I would stay longer here with kind Frau Martha. I have

CORNELLI

not known anybody so good except my mother; she takes as much care of me as if I were a silk-worm."

"Well then, everything is all over, if you are going away," said Cornelli in a tone as if Dino were going to be her enemy to whom she wanted to fling the bitterest insults, and her eyes shone under her black locks like glowing coals.

She turned away as if she wanted to say:

"Then I don't want to know anything more about anything." But Dino understood the meaning of this outbreak of anger.

"No, Cornelli, turn around to me," he said appealingly. "It is not all over, it has just begun. Just the opposite of what you say is going to happen. I have arranged to-day with Frau Martha to come back again next year in the Summer, and then every year after, until we grow old and have white hairs, you and I."

But Cornelli only saw before her what had to be at the present. She could not turn so quickly.

"Yes, until next year is so frightfully long

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

that you would forget everything a hundred times before then," she ejaculated as if she were having the liveliest quarrel with her companion.

"No, I shall not do that," said Dino calmly, "not one single time, much less a hundred. I will prove it to you, Cornelli. Now let us have a good time together and be glad that I have still four more days to stay and that I will always come back again later on, and meanwhile the kid will grow big, then we can drive it out together. I will be the driver and you the lady in the carriage; that will be splendid!"

But Cornelli could not be really happy any more. She kept seeing the time before her when Dino would go away and then everything would be at an end. The moment came quickly enough and when good-bye had been said in Martha's house, where Cornelli had come early in the morning, and Dino had gone, Cornelli laid her head in her arms on the table, and cried pitifully, and troubled Martha sat beside her and wept softly with her.

CORNELLI

That evening when supper was over and Cornelli rose to leave the room, her cousin said:

“ You haven’t spoken a single word to-day. You grow more vexatious instead of better. Shall your father, when he comes home, find you worse than when he left you? ”

“ Good night,” said Cornelli in an unfriendly tone and left the room without looking up.

“ There is absolutely nothing to be done with her, you see yourself, Betty, although you have believed all along that we could gradually work a change for the better,” said Fräulein Dorner, when Cornelli had closed the door. “ Have we with all our good intentions accomplished anything that could delight her father, when he has to live with the child again? Instead of cheering his lonely life she will be a continued vexation and offence to him. Such a sight! Have you ever seen such obstinacy as the girl has shown in this respect? ”

“ No, really never,” replied her friend. “ It seems exactly as if everything said to her had

A NEW FRIENDSHIP

had the opposite effect. Disfiguring her head grows worse every time, no matter how much we explain to her how frightful it looks. I should like to know how this obstinacy can be broken, whether by unusual severity or by associating with other children who would cure her by laughing at her."

"I shall do nothing and say nothing more; it is of no use," concluded Fräulein Dorner. "My cousin must decide for himself what is to be done with the girl. But one thing I know surely, whatever is done, this child will never be a joy to her father."

CHAPTER VII

A NEW SORROW

ALL the fruit trees in the Director's garden hung full of smiling fruit. Autumn had come. Bright red apples and golden butter-pears gleamed forth from among all the green branches, and small dark blue plums, dripping honey, were falling here and there from the heavily laden trees. Whoever passed by the garden had to stand still and notice the amazing abundance, and more than one had a great desire to jump over the hedge to snatch one of the golden pears.

Cornelli was sitting on her bench under the hazelnut tree and staring straight ahead. Mathis was coming along from the stable. He had on his good coat; something unusual must be going to happen.

“ Will you come too, Cornelli? ” he asked, stepping up to the bench, where she was sitting. “ I am going to harness immediately; your Papa is

A NEW SORROW

coming at eleven o'clock. I am going to drive down to the lake to get him. Come, the bays will go well; they have rested long enough. Come on, it will be fine."

Cornelli shook her head.

"No?" said Mathis disappointed. "I had wagered you would enjoy driving out in the morning with the lively horses to bring home your Papa. Shall I bring down the pears there for you? No, not that either?" Then Mathis shook his head and went along. "If only our master had half a dozen boys, and just as many girls, how fine it would be on our estate! Then there wouldn't be so many wonderful pears hanging sad and neglected on the trees," he muttered as he went away, "and no pleasure in driving out with two such horses!"

Cornelli had risen from her seat; she had seen Herr Malinger coming. It was time for lessons. The teacher now sat most of the time shaking his head beside his pupil. It required all his patience to bear her complete indifference to everything

CORNELLI

she ought to learn. To-day it was no different and when the two hours came to an end and the carriage was just arriving at the house, and bringing home Cornelli's father, Herr Malingen was very much surprised when his pupil did not jump up with delight and run away, but looked shyly through the window and did not stir.

“ You may go, Cornelli, it is your Papa; lessons are done.”

The teacher went away.

Cornelli heard her father come in and heard the ladies greet him with loud exclamations of delight. Then she wiped away a tear that had risen, then went across to the room her father had entered.

“ God bless you, my child! Have you come at last? ” he said joyfully to her. “ But how you look, Cornelli! ” he continued in an altered voice, “ what is this? ” Cornelli had silently offered him her hand; she looked shyly aside. “ What is the matter with you? What makes you look so? I can hardly recognize you at all! Brush that

A NEW SORROW

gipsy hair away from your forehead. Why don't you look at me gladly? Why do you look away? I have been keenly looking forward with pleasure for a whole month to my return home and to my daughter, who would have improved so much during my absence, as I thought, and how do I find you, Cornelli?" Her father regarded his indifferent child with pain and chagrin. She did not say a word. Over her face half hidden by locks of hair gray clouds seemed to lie, which threatened to break out into a wicked rain.

"We will talk about all this later, Friedrich; now let us celebrate the first moments of your home-coming gladly for you should enjoy yourself and not be troubled by any sad thoughts," said his cousin, leading him to the table, festively decorated and laden with all the good things which Esther knew were her master's favorite dishes. But the thoughts of his home-coming were so disturbed that the festive table did not brighten them. The Director scarcely touched the fine things offered him. He kept looking

CORNELLI

again and again at his child, sitting with bowed head silently in front of him and only now and then casting a furtive glance at him. Eating progressed in no very festive way. It was easily seen how the Director forced himself to say the few words he spoke, how his thoughts occupied him and how little pleasure they could afford him. As soon as it was practical he rose from the table and went away. The cousin gazed after him.

“He is going over to the iron-works,” she said to her friend, who was left alone with her. Cornelli had left the room immediately after her father.

“It has taken hold of him more than I thought. He must relieve his agitation a little; the workmen over there will free him somewhat from his depression, as he will hear much that is new and I hope delightful, about great work and good business. It is hard for him, too, to have to resume all his restless activity for such a child. But it is really so, he must realize it himself.”

A NEW SORROW

After some time the Director came hurrying back. He did not look as if he had been very much calmed and delighted over there.

The ladies had seated themselves again to welcome him to coffee.

“They have spoiled a great deal over there,” said the Director, sitting down with the ladies, “but I can put up with all that, even if some considerable loss should result. But one thing I cannot put up with or hear, that is to see my child again so. She has a frightened look, and as if she had grown stupid. She doesn’t show the slightest pleasure at my coming home, has not spoken a word since I came, hasn’t looked at me one single time, sits all the while as if her existence was a real misfortune—it is not to be borne. What has happened to the child?” The Director jumped up and strode up and down the room in his excitement.

“Nothing has happened to the child, at least we know of nothing, do we, Betty?” said the cousin. “We have both tried, first of all in

CORNELLI

your interest and especially because we found it necessary for the child, to teach her good behavior and manners, which she lacked in great measure. But I must tell you plainly, Friedrich, however painful it is for me to do so, your child is so terribly obstinate that there is nothing at all to be done about it. The more we struggled against it and tried to bring the child on the right way, the worse everything became, the more plainly she persisted in her self-will. What haven't we said and commanded about this disfigurement with her hair in her face! All in vain; on the contrary the more we said, Cornelli pulled her hair farther over her face. Then I gave up, for I saw only punishment would help and that I would not undertake; I did not come to the house for that. Whether punishment would specially help with such obstinacy or only make her more stubborn, I would not venture to decide. I have never in my life seen such a stubborn child. I wonder who can train this child right."

A NEW SORROW

The Director walked up and down the room with more and more restless steps. Then he stood still in the middle of it.

“ For Heaven’s sake, there must be some way to train a child of ten years!” he exclaimed. “ Is there no means for bringing up so young a creature except punishment? That is a horrible thought and I don’t wish to know about it. Have you no advice then? What is to be done with the child? You ladies must know how a little girl should be brought up. Something must be done and indeed immediately. I am to blame for neglecting the girl. I have left her too long in the wrong hands. What would my Cornelia say if she could see her child!” The Director threw himself down in his chair and hid his face in his hands.

“ Calm yourself, Friedrich, you are not to blame. Dispositions are only dispositions,” said his cousin soothingly. “ But we have had a thought, my friend and I, that perhaps would be a means of helping the child, to send her to a

CORNELLI

school in the city, to one where there are a large number of children and young girls together. Children often do each other good, as they rub against each other, mutually correcting each other's faults and making fun of them."

"Do you think that could be good for Cornelli?" asked her father doubtfully. "The child is not accustomed to such derision and such bantering."

"It would make all the more impression on her, that is clear," replied his cousin. "Believe me, it is the only means that can help to break the child's self-will. Nobody can correct her if it couldn't be done in such a school; you can take my word for it, Friedrich."

"She is still so young," said her father sympathetically. "Must she be sent among strangers, away from her home? But you may be right; it can't be better here for the child, only worse, so it may have to be. Can you advise me where Cornelli ought to go? Do you know a school you can recommend?"

A NEW SORROW

The cousin knew one, as she said, and in order to help the Director in the matter would immediately take steps for him as soon as she reached home. In vain Fräulein Dorner hoped her cousin's spirits would soon change and he would be the old merry companion again. He took all pains to be an entertaining host for his guests whenever they were all at the table, but his eyes kept turning to his child, who sat silently in her place without looking up. Then a deeper shadow would pass over his face and it could be seen that he had difficulty in taking part in the conversation again.

His cousin had had enough of the Director's unhappy behavior. She would try for the last time to arouse him a little and bring him to his senses.

"It seems as if you were occupied to such a degree, Friedrich, that you almost forget your amiability as host," she said on the third day after his return. "We are thinking of going back to the city. Perhaps you will agree to it."

CORNELLI

“ I fully acquiesce in your decision,” replied the Director, coming towards her. “ You are right. I am the most unamiable host to be found, but you must also understand that this change in my child has taken away all happiness and I can only follow one single thought, how it can be remedied. I hope the ladies will visit my house again some pleasanter time. You have only to order the carriage whenever you wish it.”

The cousin had not expected this answer. “ You really go too far, Friedrich,” she said with vexation. “ How can a man set aside everything so, and let his whole thought turn away on account of such a child?”

“ You forget that she is my child and my Cornelia’s child,” replied the Director. “ Let us not talk any more about it; we should not understand each other at all. I am also too much indebted to you for your good will to cause you any more vexation at the end.”

Two days later the carriage was standing before the door. The ladies stepped in. Mine also

A NEW SORROW

stepped in. She had known how to make herself so much liked by the two ladies that according to her wish they were going to take her with them, for she longed to become a city girl and no more live with country people. One or the other of the ladies would then take her as chamber-maid, which one was still to be decided. Esther was very much disturbed because Mine could leave such a good house as theirs was, without any reasons, for since she had ruled in the house ever since its establishment the honor of the house was hers. She was standing as she was bidden behind her master, when he held out his hand for a last farewell in the carriage.

Mine looked in the other direction to where Cornelli was standing. "Won't you give me your hand for a last good-bye? That is very friendly of you, as you have always been on the whole," she said in a low voice to the child.

Then Esther burst forth. "Mine," she called as loud as possible, "be as friendly and tell the ladies on the journey who stood on the sofa and

CORNELLI

left the dusty footprints there. They were not a child's shoes!"

Mine grew crimson. Fräulein Dorner looked with astonishment into the burning face. She really expected a plausible answer. None came.

"Go on, Mathis," ordered Fräulein Dorner, somewhat agitated; she did not wish for any further enlightenment in the matter.

The Director went away.

Then Cornelli grasped Esther's broad hand and pressed it with both hers, and for the first time for a long while a gleam of happiness came over her face.

"Oh, I am so glad that you said that. I am so glad, you can't think at all how glad I am!" she said quite vehemently. "If you had not said that they would have believed and declared that I did it and then lied about it. But how did Mine know who did it?"

"She knew very well, because she did it herself," replied Esther.

"Oh, oh, did she do it with her own feet?" ex-

A NEW SORROW

claimed Cornelli. "Then it is a good thing that she has gone. We would rather be alone, just you and I, Esther, wouldn't we?"

"We would," said Esther gratified. "Tell that to your Papa yourself, and tell him that I would not mind doing double the work, but cattish people I can't endure."

Cornelli had not yet spoken with her father since he came back. She felt timid with him. She knew her looks displeased him, but she could do nothing about it; it would have to be so, for if he discovered what was under her hair, he would feel still more aversion to her. She wanted to give him Esther's message and went slowly and hesitatingly to his room, not at all as formerly when she had anything to say to him and rushed in.

"Oh, if it wouldn't be so any more," she thought and the thought pressed so heavily on her heart she had to stand still a moment. Her father just then opened the door, in front of which she was standing.

CORNELLI

“Are you really here, Cornelli?” he said delighted. “Are you going to make me a little visit? We haven’t really seen each other at all as yet. Come in with me. I was just going to get you. I have something to talk with you about. Let us sit down and have a nice chat together.”

Cornelli stepped into the room. She did not speak a word nor look up at her father. “Come, Cornelli,” he said as he led her through the room and sat down beside her. “I have something to tell you that will delight you. You have changed so while I was away and not at all to your advantage, that now something must be done for your education; it is high time. I am going to take you to a school in the city, where you will be together with many other children and young girls and learn much from them and make friends with them. Then you will become different inwardly and outwardly and come home to delight your father. Now I cannot enjoy you. I don’t know what the matter is with you, but

A NEW SORROW

you can improve; you must have some training. Next week we will go."

Cornelli grew white as snow from fright. At first she made no sound, then suddenly broke into a flood of tears.

"Oh, Papa!" she sobbed, "let me stay at home. I will surely do right. Oh, don't send me to the city with a lot of children, oh, I cannot, I cannot! Oh, Papa, only don't send me away!"

The Director could not bear tears; he could not listen to the child's weeping. "It must be for yourself, for your best good," he said, to convince himself, but he could not listen to the child's grieving. He hurried away.

After several hours when it was time for supper, the Director was coming into the house again from the iron-works.

Esther came towards him. "I am glad you have come, Herr Hellmut," she said much excited. "I wanted to bring Cornelli down to try my plum tarts, that she loves the best, but she

CORNELLI

only screamed: 'Leave me here! Leave me here!' Oh, Herr Hellmut, if the child should be sick and die!"

"What, Esther, no children die of obstinacy."

The Director tried to speak harshly, but he didn't wholly succeed. He ran up the stairs to Cornelli's room. The child was on her knees beside her bed and had her head buried in the pillow. She was crying as if her heart would break.

"Oh, don't send me away, Papa, don't send me away!" she cried to her father.

He saw how Cornelli's whole body was trembling from anguish and agitation. "I can't bear that," said the Director, who seized his hat and ran out of the house.

Martha was sitting in her peaceful living-room with her mending basket and wondering if Cornelli would be all right again now that she was alone with her father if the old days would come back again, or if something new would be decided about Cornelli's education. Then the

A NEW SORROW

door suddenly opened and the Director stepped in.

“ I don’t know how to help myself any longer, Martha,” he said in an agitated tone. “ You must help me. You knew my wife and know my child and love her and she is attached to you. Tell me what is the matter with the child? How long has she been so terribly obstinate? Or has she always been so and has kept growing more stubborn? Have you noticed that terrible obstinacy and stubbornness have increased in her during my absence? ”

“ About Cornelli it is not so bad, Herr Hellmut, no, no, Cornelli is not a bad child, surely not. But will you not take a seat? ” Martha said suddenly placing a chair for the Director, who was walking back and forth, so that he might sit down. But he declined. He was too restless to sit down. “ It was too harsh and sudden to have everything about the child changed, ” continued Martha; “ an older person might have become a little frightened, and Cornelli is still so young.

CORNELLI

Everything all at once and very suddenly is too much for a young plant; it must have time for it all and the better kind of plant it is, the more tender care is necessary."

"But you would not suggest to me that it is not high time for Cornelli's education to be in the best hands," said the Director, still standing in the middle of the room. "I must consider it a blessing for the child at last to come to be in contact with women of cultivation and good breeding, who would train her in every way and could awaken in her all that was beautiful and noble and good, as my Cornelia would have awakened in her, and as she herself was in such a surpassing way. The child has no resemblance to her, at least not externally. She has lost what formerly recalled her."

"Herr Hellmut, if I may venture to say anything to you, I will tell you this," replied Martha in her quiet way. "I have always noticed that a little love accomplishes more good than so much fine instruction, and that a young child can be

A NEW SORROW

more frightened by unloving words than grown people realize and they do not understand the shyness which may result from them.

“Cornelli has not lost her mother’s eyes, although they can’t be seen any longer under the hair covering her face.”

“That is just it, Martha, this disfigurement, this obstinacy, which clings to it, this timid unhappy manner, this entirely altered, perverse nature of the child is really what distresses, pains me, cripples all joy, all courage, all hope in the future, completely spoils my life.” The Director spoke more and more agitatedly. “So I will avail myself of the only help I know; I am going to send the girl away to a school with other children, and now she is behaving as if she were in despair. I can’t see her like that; it seems as if my Cornelia could have no rest in Heaven if she hears her child weeping and beseeching me so.”

“Herr Hellmut, supposing you should keep the child at home for a little while so that she can get composed,” suggested Martha in a

CORNELLI

modest way. “Cornelli has had to go through so much that was new, it would perhaps be a good thing if the child could stay quiet for a little, and meanwhile you could gradually make her better acquainted with the idea of school, so that she wouldn’t have any more fear of it. I would gladly help a little, and also speak well of such a house where many nice children are together.”

“That is a good thought, Martha,” said the Director a little pacified. “You help me and do what you can to make the idea likeable and desirable to the child. You are my only help, Martha, think of that.”

The Director went away.

“Oh Lord, the good Director!” said Martha watching him. “What kind of help has he in an old simple Martha! But I will gladly do whatever I can.”

The Director went immediately to his Cornelli’s room. She was still kneeling in the same place beside her bed, and sobbing.

A NEW SORROW

“Get up, Cornelli, and stop crying,” he said. “I meant well for you, but you have not understood. You may stay at home for the present; perhaps later it will seem different to you. Go to Martha’s to-morrow and listen attentively to what she says; she is your best friend.”

A more comforting word could not have been said to Cornelli. How hopefully it sounded in her ears after all the frightening talk about going away. Cornelli got up immediately.

“May I go to Martha’s now?” she asked appealingly.

“Yes, go now,” answered her father, “but you really haven’t eaten anything.”

“That is no matter,” said Cornelli, and was already hurrying down the stairs.

At last Cornelli was running again. Then she was hurrying up the steps and was in Martha’s room.

“I have to go away, Martha, not at once but I shall have to go, Papa has said so,” the child called as she was entering. “Can’t you help me

CORNELLI

so that I shall not have to go? Papa said I was to come to you, perhaps because I have kept crying and couldn't stop, but I can't stop unless you will help me, so I shall not have to go away. I don't want to go where there are a great many strange children, I can't. I really couldn't bear it. Oh, how terrible, so help me, Martha."

The anguish in Cornelli's voice and the sight of her tear-stained face went very much to Martha's heart.

"Come, Cornelli, sit down in your little chair just as you used to do in the old time," she said pacifyingly. "Then I will tell you something that may comfort you, and help you as it helped and comforted me in evil days and still does. You see, Cornelli, I have had to go through great trouble too, certainly as great as yours is to-day, for I had to give a child back to the dear Lord. Then I cried as you are doing, and much louder: 'No, I cannot! I cannot!' And the more I strove against it, the more terrible became my burden until I thought I should despair. Then

A NEW SORROW

I cried in my heart: ‘Can nobody help me?’ Then I suddenly was aware who could help me. And I kneeled down and called and besought God: ‘Oh help me! Help me, Thou who alone canst help me!’”

“If I should pray at once that I needn’t have to go away, Martha, would the dear Lord help me immediately?” Cornelli asked eagerly.

“Yes, He would surely help you,” Martha assured her, “but in such a way as He knows would be good for you. You see, Cornelli, if it is best for you to go away and you ask your Father in Heaven very sincerely to stand by you, He would help you so that your life among strangers would not be so hard as you fear, and that you would have confidence in your heart that you can call on Him to help you whenever anything seems hard. He will always help you as will be best for you and will make you happy.”

“Did you have to give back the child?” Cornelli wanted to know.

“Yes, the dear Lord took him to Himself.”

CORNELLI

“Were you ever happy again, Martha?”

“Yes, yes. The pain was great, but I only thought of my child and how well off he was, and knew how many sorrows he had escaped. The dear Lord gave me the assurance that He means well with us. Then I could be happy again.”

“I am going home now,” said Cornelli suddenly standing up. It seemed as if something compelled her to go.

“Well then go, but will you think about what I have told you?” asked Martha, accompanying the child out.

“Yes, I will,” said Cornelli. This time she ran home. Some unusual thought must have impelled her to hurry so.

Cornelli had never prayed so earnestly and heartily as she did to-day kneeling beside her bed. She gave all her sorrow over to her Father in Heaven and asked Him to help her and make her happy once more.

CHAPTER VIII

A MOTHER

EVERY morning when the Director sat down to his breakfast, he found beside his cup all the letters and papers that had come in the morning mail.

“Good gracious!” he exclaimed the morning following the exciting day, “whom have you for a correspondent in the city, Cornelli? Here is a letter for you.”

Cornelli looked up from her cup and glanced skeptically at the letter.

“It is really so: Fräulein Cornelli Hellmut in Illerbach, Iron-Works,” read her father. “There, take it.”

Cornelli opened the letter with great excitement and read:

CORNELLI

“ DEAR CORNELLI:

“ Just think, I have been sick and have to lie in bed. The doctor has so far forbidden me to read. I must not write either except a short letter. It is terribly tiresome, for my sisters are at school the whole day. Mamma has always so much to do and Mux is still a terribly useless little fellow. Couldn’t you come and visit me? It would please me immensely. You could tell me so much about dear Illerbach, about kind Frau Martha, whom I am almost as fond of as if she was my grandmother. And about the little kid and Mathis, and the beautiful horses and especially about yourself. I always enjoyed being with you so much, I should be terribly glad to have a visit from you. So come, please, and very soon!

“ Your true friend,

“ DINO.”

“ Now,” said her father as Cornelli folded up the letter again, “ may I read too, what is written in it? ”

Cornelli handed him the letter.

A MOTHER

“What kind of a friend is this, who wants to see you so much?” asked her father in surprise. “You will be sure to begin to cry because you have to go to the city.”

“No, I should really like to go to see him, Papa,” said Cornelli. “It is Dino, who was at Martha’s house.”

Her father laid down his spoon in surprise and looked at his daughter in amazement.

“How you surprise me, Cornelli,” he finally said. “Do you want to make a visit in quite a strange family, none of whom you know, except this boy, and have no timidity nor hesitation about appearing the way you look?”

“Dino knows me already and he knows perfectly well that I am coming just to see him and he will manage so I needn’t see his mamma and his sisters. He knows everything about it already,” was Cornelli’s explanation.

“That is nothing at all,” said her father curtly, who folded up his papers and went away.

Soon afterwards he went in to Martha’s house.

CORNELLI

“ I have come again, Martha, what do you say to that? ” he said to the astonished woman. “ A letter and an invitation for a visit has come for Cornelli, from a young boy who was with you; what does it mean? Who are his parents? ”

This question opened a fountain which completely overflowed. Martha had never known a boy so polite and friendly as Dino was even to the humblest people, and he was finely brought up, so well instructed and yet so simple and showed such a childlike attachment to old plain Martha! Never had she read such letters as those from his mother to this son, so beautiful and affectionate and uplifting. He had always read these to her and every time she had been moved to tears. Never had she seen such beautifully made garments as the boy had, and this was the work of one of his sisters.

“ Martha,” finally broke in the Director, “ I conclude from your information that it would be fortunate for my daughter if she could spend a day in this family.”

A MOTHER

“ If you could take her there, I should be delighted—oh, oh, I don’t know any greater pleasure.”

Martha had to wipe her eyes she was so moved.

“ You shall have it, Martha, we will start to-morrow. In the evening you shall know all about it.”

Whereupon the Director grasped her hand, shook it and went away.

“ Get everything ready, Cornelli; to-morrow we are going to the city,” he called to his daughter, who still sat thinking on her garden bench. “ Esther will wake you in time, early, about six o’clock.”

“ It will be done punctually, Herr Hellmut,” sounded Esther’s voice from one of the open windows.

Esther was a good guardian, anyhow she heard everything that went on in the house and the vicinity.

Early the next morning the shining bay horses trotted out of the valley. They had four hours

CORNELLI

to travel, but it was an amusement for them; the farther they went the more spirited they became. Mathis had to prevent them from galloping all the time.

Cornelli sat thoughtfully in her corner. She was planning what she would say to the maid on their arrival, for she wanted to see Dino only and be taken at once to his room. Then she would forbid him to call his mother or his sisters, for she wanted to see him alone. She would make a long visit with Dino and then go away very softly without any one noticing it. She had to think over too, all that she had to say to Dino. Above all he must know that it had been found out who had stood on the sofa, for she had told him also about the deep resentment and grief she had had to bear so long.

So they reached the city much sooner than Cornelli had expected. The carriage was already standing in front of the hotel where her father decided to stay. Cornelli jumped out.

“ Shall I come back in four hours, Papa? ” she

A MOTHER

asked. "I can surely find the way. Dino has described it to me."

She was going to hurry away.

"Wait, wait! Don't go so, I am coming with you," said her father.

That was not as Cornelli had planned it, but there was nothing else to do. Dino had given his exact address in the letter, and the Director was well acquainted with the city.

So they walked swiftly from one street to another until they came to a narrow little street where the house designated was situated. Here they had to climb four flights of stairs. The Director stood at the foot of the narrow steep staircase, at the end of which the door occupied half the last step.

"If the people living here correspond to their home, we shall not stay up there long," he said looking distrustfully at the inconvenient entrance.

"Dino doesn't correspond," said Cornelli quickly, for although she did not quite under-

CORNELLI

stand what her Papa meant she felt that his words were derogatory to her friend.

“Climb up there, Cornelli, and ring the bell,” said her father. “When the door is open I may find room to come up.”

Cornelli obeyed. A slender girl, somewhat taller than Cornelli, opened the door, and looked with a pair of dark earnest eyes in surprise at the strangers. Cornelli stepped back.

“Well, what can be seen is not so terrible,” said the Director stepping forward.

“God bless you, my child. Is your mother here; may I speak to her a moment?”

It was Nika who had opened the door and now with great politeness led the gentleman into the living-room where she said she would immediately bring her mother, who was with her sick brother.

At her polite invitation the Director sat down in an easy chair and looked around in surprise at the small but otherwise well arranged room decorated with all sorts of pretty paintings.

A MOTHER

As Nika was going out Cornelli said in a low voice to her: "I should like to see Dino."

"Come, I will show you the way," sounded a small voice from behind the door, where Mux had quickly hidden himself and had been watching the visitors with inquisitive eyes. He came out and took hold of Cornelli's hand, then he drew her along with him. The mother had heard the strange voice and was just coming out of the next room into the living-room.

"She will be equal to talking with Cornelli," thought the Director smiling. He rose and introduced himself. "In response to your son's invitation, I have brought my daughter here, Frau Halm," he said. "If convenient to you, she may stay a few hours with her sick friend; then she will return to me at the hotel."

"I am very grateful to you for your friendliness," replied the lady. "My sick Dino has been anticipating much pleasure from her visit. We are already well acquainted with Cornelli and fond of her through him. She showed my boy so

CORNELLI

much kindness and entertained him so admirably when he was alone in Illerbach, that he and I owe her heartfelt gratitude. So may I not ask to have Cornelli stay with us two or three days, or at least all day to-day?"

" You are very kind, Frau Halm," replied the Director, somewhat astonished that his shy, unfriendly daughter should have shown the boy so much friendliness and entertainment.

" Merely politeness," he said to himself—" that couldn't be," he continued aloud, " the child would not stay; she is very shy and has all sorts of peculiar ways, as you must have noticed from her appearance. Your daughter looks different."

" I surely would not keep Cornelli here against her will, but may I hope for her father's permission if the child's wishes are the same as ours?"

Frau Halm had asked the question in such a way that the Director could have no other wish than this which seemed very desirable to him.

" Indeed, Frau Halm, absolutely and with

A MOTHER

great pleasure," he assured her. "What could I like better for my child than such society as yours and your daughters'? But I am convinced that Cornelli will want to go home with me. But accept my warm thanks for your kindness. To stay in your house one day would do my child good."

The Director said good-bye and went away. At the door a schoolgirl with school-bag and her entire equipment came rushing towards him so that a collision was imminent. The Director opened his arms, Agnes flew into them and so it was averted in the gentlest way. Agnes always came with a rush; she couldn't do otherwise. Then the Director burst into a hearty laugh; Agnes had to laugh too.

"You must belong to *Frau Halm?*" he said, looking with pleasure into the fresh face with the frank bright eyes. How pretty and neat everything looked about the child!

"Yes, indeed," was the quick answer. Then Agnes ran on.

CORNELLI

“What a fortunate mother! What a fortunate woman!” the Director said to himself. “And my child beside such an one! Yes, my child and the child of such a mother!”

The Director hurried faster and faster, as if he wanted to escape from everything that pursued him so distressingly.

Dino, who told his mother everything that happened to him, had described his stay in Illerbach and the details of his intercourse with Cornelli. He had told her also about her strange trouble, but she had had to promise faithfully to keep this secret entirely to herself; it did not seem to Dino wrong that his mother should know this, for she knew everything that he knew. After the invitation for the visit had gone to Cornelli, their mother had strictly forbidden the children to make any remarks when she came about her hair, which possibly she might wear in a peculiar way, or to show any surprise at it, nor trouble themselves about it. The mother wished them to do so.

A MOTHER

Little Mux was very much pleased to have a new companion. He considered Cornelli as an old acquaintance Dino had talked about her so much. He led her first to the kitchen.

“Dino is surely not in bed here,” said Cornelli in surprise.

“No, this is the kitchen, there are no beds here,” stated Mux, “but I want to show you first why Agnes cried a whole hour long to-day, or perhaps two.” Whereupon Mux led his new friend to a big pile of apple-peelings lying in a refuse pail. “Now you see how stupid Agnes is to cry beforehand when there is going to be apple-cake by and by.”

“Why did she cry so?” asked Cornelli sympathetically. She knew so well how hard it is to have to cry.

“Nobody knows,” explained Mux.

“Why didn’t the maid pare the apples?” asked Cornelli further.

“There isn’t any maid, only stupid Trine,” stated Mux.

CORNELLI

“Who is stupid Trine?” Cornelli then desired to know further.

“She has to help. She is short and stout,” Mux described. “Mamma has to show her how to cook, and she has to bring what is needed, and always brings the wrong thing. Then Dino says: ‘Trine is stupid, you must send her away.’ Then Mamma says: ‘Trine has to live,’ so she isn’t sent away.”

Cornelli felt a deep sympathy for Agnes. She surely must have some secret trouble as she had herself. She would not feel afraid of Agnes as she did of the proud sister, who had received them.

“Mux, doesn’t your other sister ever cry? Aren’t you afraid of her?” asked Cornelli.

“No, not a bit, not a single little bit,” asserted Mux. “But she is always making up a face as if she wanted to cry and a thousand, thousand times begins to cry when nobody knows why and I don’t either. She doesn’t tell.”

Cornelli’s shyness towards Nika immediately

A MOTHER

changed to great sympathy. Perhaps she had the worst trouble of all, so she had to cry and could not tell why.

“Now let us go to see Dino,” she said hurrying towards the door which the little one had shown her.

“Wait, first I want to show you the big picture-book, you will be terribly pleased with that,” asserted Mux, “and there is something in it that looks like you, an owl; it has feathers over its eyes like you, but you mustn’t speak about it. Mamma has forbidden it.”

“No, I don’t care to see the book; now come at once to Dino,” urged Cornelli.

“But you must see it by and by,” declared Mux, “there are so many lovely pictures in it. You will find out you will want to look at the book over and over again.”

Mux then led Cornelli out of the kitchen and opened a door not far away.

“Have you come at last, Cornelli?” exclaimed Dino to her, as he sat up in his bed and looked

CORNELLI

gladly at his friend. Cornelli felt great pleasure at seeing Dino once more, with whom she had spent the only happy hours she had known the whole Summer long. She seated herself quickly by his bed and began to tell him about everything that had happened in Illerbach since he went away, and Dino had so many questions to ask and Cornelli to answer that the time passed they knew not how.

Mux had disappeared. He could no longer claim his new friend for himself, so he went to explore and find out what was coming to the table for the visitor.

Then the mother came into Dino's room.

"My dear child," she said taking Cornelli by the hand, "I have not really seen you yet, but I thought you and Dino would rather be undisturbed together for a little while, and talk over your experiences and your friends in Illerbach. Dino has been so delighted to have this visit. Now come with me to our dinner-table. Then Dino will have a little sleep and later he

A MOTHER

will want you to come back again to sit by his bed."

This was a hard moment for Cornelli. She had hoped to be able to spend the whole day alone with Dino and that nobody would trouble about her any more. Now she would have to sit at the table with Dino's mother and his two sisters. Mux was still her consolation, he was so attentive. But she felt so keenly how different she looked from the children there and how terribly, as she stood beside pretty Nika, and although she didn't show any aversion Cornelli thought she must have felt it silently. Mux had also noticed how she looked and had spoken plainly about it. And now came Agnes besides. The fact that she too had some trouble and the proud-looking Nika as well, Cornelli felt was a bond between them. It gave her courage to follow the mother, who stood waiting at the door for her. Agnes was standing expectantly in the middle of the living-room, when Cornelli came in. She came towards their guest and shook her hand.

CORNELLI

“I am glad you have come, Cornelli,” she said gaily. “Dino has talked about you for so long, and we want to know you too.”

“I am going to sit beside you,” said Mux and moved his chair next to Cornelli’s.

“Stay where you belong, that is my place,” directed Agnes decidedly, as she forcibly pushed the chair back together with Mux.

The mother had gone out into the kitchen, so Mux could not look for her help; this increased his anger.

“Yes, you always want to boss everybody,” he exclaimed wrathfully, “and you tied somebody to a wheel.”

His mother was just coming in.

“Mamma, Mux is saying such terrible things,” Agnes called out to her. “Mustn’t he go to bed?”

Mux made a strong opposition in reply to this sentence but his mother cut the matter short.

“No, no, Cornelli is with us for the first time to-day; it is a festival,” she said with great

A MOTHER

friendliness, "so Mux must not be sent to bed, but he must at once sit very quietly in his chair and say grace with us, then everything will be right."

Sure enough Mux became so quiet at the pacifying words and the good smell of the soup, that he was able to repeat grace in a very proper manner. That he had struggled to sit beside her, had so delighted and touched Cornelli, that she began to think what she could do to please little Mux.

As soon as they had finished eating Nika and Agnes had immediately hurried off to school. Their mother had to oversee Trine's work, she said, and Mux could try to entertain Cornelli for a little while. This pleased him very much.

"Now, I will show you how Agnes tied somebody to a wheel," he said triumphantly.

"No, I don't believe that, Mux; why should he have held still?" said Cornelli.

"You can read all about it; it tells everything there, then you will see." Mux laid his big pic-

CORNELLI

ture-book on Cornelli's lap and pointed to a wonderful colored picture to which he had opened. "Read what it says there," he instructed Cornelli. "Dino read it aloud once, so I know it."

Cornelli read aloud: "Agnes had Rudolf von Warth bound to the wheel."

"Now you see," said Mux with satisfaction.

Cornelli did not know exactly what the picture represented; she began to read the story explaining it. She read on and on more and more eagerly, it was all told so graphically. She turned one page after another.

"Now you know about it," said Mux a little impatiently, "now look at the goat-carriage."

"Oh, I want to finish reading, it is so sad, but I want to know all about it, what happened next ——"

Mux had already turned the leaves; the goat-carriage must be seen.

"But Mux," continued Cornelli hurriedly, "it is quite a different Agnes, a queen. You mustn't

A MOTHER

believe any longer that your Agnes did such a terrible thing."

"Well, now look at the goat-carriage," urged Mux a little disappointed.

"Why is the child crying so by the road? See how it holds its hands to its eyes! Oh, it hurts him so! Do you know why?"

Mux shook his head.

"Then I must read about it at once," said Cornelli, and she began to read the story and became so absorbed in it, that she did not notice how Mux was pulling her and pushing her, and then shook the book to make her stop reading.

Then the mother came in again.

"Dino had taken a short nap," she said; "he is longing to see you, Cornelli; will you come?"

Cornelli immediately closed the book. She wanted so much to be with Dino but she looked longingly back at the story, she desired so much to know how it continued.

"Do you like the book? It has been the delight of all my children from the oldest to the

CORNELLI

youngest," said the mother, noticing how Cornelli looked back at the book. " You can look at it later, there is still time enough."

But Cornelli had so much to talk about with Dino that the time came to an end before she realized it.

Mux came running with the message that Cornelli must come to supper, they had to eat early to-night because she had to leave afterwards.

" Oh, what a shame!" said Cornelli jumping up, for she knew that her father did not like to be kept waiting.

" Bring Mother here, Mux," said Dino.

The little boy ran to get her.

" Wouldn't you like to stay with us, Cornelli, at least for two or three days? It would be great. Wouldn't you? You will, won't you?" asked Dino urgently.

Cornelli felt very queer about it. She did not dare to say yes. It was quite incomprehensible to her that everybody in this house was so friendly and that they wanted her to stay with

A MOTHER

them. Perhaps it would not remain so if she stayed and they should come to know her well. The mother came in very soon with Mux, who had already informed her that Cornelli was to stay, as Dino would not let her go, for he had listened to what Dino had said.

“Stay with us, Cornelli, as I hear you have already agreed,” said the mother much delighted. “I wanted to propose it to you. Now that Dino has settled it with you, I am very glad, for your father gave his permission for you to stay, and I have only to write him a word at once. Now you can be quietly together, there is no hurry about supper.”

The mother went to write her message to the Director. Later short, fat Trine ran to the hotel with it.

Cornelli with a wondering feeling, half of satisfaction, half of anxiety, sat down again beside Dino. He noticed her trembling voice at once.

“Don’t you want to stay with us?” he said.

CORNELLI

“ You ought to know how glad I am to have you. Now you can come to me whenever they all have something to do.”

“ Yes indeed, Dino, I like to be with you so much,” asserted Cornelli, “ and with Mux too, and your mother is so kind to me, but I am afraid of your sisters, they are so very different from me. And then I keep thinking how terrible it is for stupid Trine, when she does everything wrong and yet can’t do any different. I know very well what it is to be stupid,” she ended sighing.

Dino had to laugh a little.

“ How did Trine suddenly come to your mind?” he asked. “ Don’t be troubled about her. Mamma is really very good to her. Now be happy again, Cornelli, and don’t worry about stupid Trine.”

Cornelli said nothing more, but Dino could easily see that she kept on thinking about something. After some time Dino’s mother explained that it was time for Dino to go to sleep, but

A MOTHER

he would have the delightful prospect of seeing his friend again in the morning.

When Cornelli came with the mother into the living-room where the sisters were sitting at their school-work, and Mux bent over his picture-book was hatching new ideas, half grown Trine was just behind them with a basket on her arm. Passing by Nika's chair her basket caught on it. Trine pulled it away so roughly that the chair was dragged vigorously to one side and Nika with it.

“ You were always four-cornered, Trine,” said Nika with vexation.

Cornelli grew quite red. It seemed to her exactly as if it was meant for her; she was surely just as four-cornered in Nika's eyes as this Trine. Trine made no apology, but became a little more awkward in her movements than before. Cornelli understood this quite well. She would do the same, she knew it.

“ Now let us sit down at the table,” said the mother, “ and later when the children have fin-

CORNELLI

ished their work, we will sing together. You sing too, don't you, Cornelli?"

"I shouldn't know the songs, so I couldn't sing," she answered shyly.

When supper was over, Mux hurried to his book and took it to Cornelli; he was eager to continue entertaining her, but his mother had a different plan for him.

"Now give the book to Cornelli; it is time for you to go to bed," she said. "To-morrow you can be with her again."

Mux resisted going.

"But don't go away before I come back again," he enjoined Cornelli, as his mother was firmly leading him away.

Cornelli felt very uncomfortable after the confiding Mux had disappeared; then she was for the first time alone with the two sisters. What would happen now? But nothing happened. The two were so deep in their studies that neither of them raised her head. Cornelli took up her book; there were really beautiful stories in it.

A MOTHER

She had already begun to read one, and wanted to know the way it ended. She began to read, and read on and on. Then came different pictures and new and wonderfully beautiful stories with them.

Suddenly loud music sounded quite near in her ears. Cornelli jumped up. Agnes was sitting at the piano in front of her and playing. Cornelli could not read any longer. Agnes played one beautiful tune after another, as rapidly and easily as if it cost her no trouble, and she was only a little more than a year older than Cornelli, as she knew from Dino. Cornelli sat in the greatest amazement and listened motionless to the wonderful melodies which sounded one after another over the strings. The mother who was making her evening visit with Dino and had to talk with him a while, finally returned to the living-room.

“Mamma,” Agnes called to her eagerly, “I was so glad that I had finished my big composition, that I played all the gay pieces I knew.”

CORNELLI

“That was right; how is it with your painting, Nika?” asked her mother.

Nika replied regretfully that she had hoped to finish it, but the days were so short and she could not do anything by artificial light. Her mother must see how little more work needed to be done.

“Only one hour longer of daylight,” she sighed, “and it would all be done.”

Nika placed under the lighted lamp a large painting similar to the lovely colored pictures decorating the room. But Cornelli had never seen such a wonderful colored picture before. Deep red shining roses hung down over an old ruin. Thick ivy twined its glossy green tendrils high up among them. An old oak-tree spread thick bushy branches over the ruined wall and beneath a clear brook flowed peacefully from the old stones to the meadow, where bright blue and red flowers stood and gave it a friendly greeting. Cornelli gazed at the wonderful picture. She had never seen such painted flowers and trees be-

A MOTHER

fore, and one could hear the shimmering brook murmuring far away through the meadow, it was all so lifelike. And Nika had done that! It seemed to Cornelli as if a deep, deep gulf separating them forever and ever lay between her and the two sisters, standing before her.

There the two stood like two great splendid beings full of beauty and talent, and here she was a four-cornered stupid Trine, whom nobody could love. The mother encouraged Nika to continue her work the next day, she took great delight in it herself. Then she sat down at the piano to sing the evening hymn.

Cornelli remained silent although Frau Halm encouraged her to sing with them, which she really could have done, for Martha had early taught her the old evening song which they had often sung together. But Cornelli's impressions had affected her so that she could not have made a sound. When the song was ended, Agnes started as if she had been stabbed.

“No, Mamma,” she exclaimed, “it is useless;

CORNELLI

when you are hoarse and Dino is lying in bed our singing is terrible. Nika only peeps like a chicken with its neck cut."

"Then we must just stop singing," said Nika, shrugging her shoulders in a superior way.

"No, there must be singing in a household, or else it is no more good," explained Agnes, "but that the most beautiful thing in the world should count for so little!"

The mother then took Cornelli kindly by the hand.

"You are tired, dear child, I can see that," she said. "I take you now to a very small sleeping-room, but I have no larger one. The door here opens into Nika and Agnes's room," she continued as she stood with Cornelli in the little room. "You can open it, if you like, then it will be as if all three of you were in the same room."

Then she said a warm good night to Cornelli and hoped she would sleep well for the first time under her roof.

A MOTHER

Nika and Agnes said "Good night" curtly. Then Cornelli was left alone in her room for the night.

She had no desire to open the door. Her shyness with the sisters had become much greater than it had been on her arrival. How terribly high the two stood above her. Cornelli had no sleep, she had so much to think about that had come before her eyes that day.

What had Agnes meant by the most beautiful thing in the world? Perhaps singing, but that was not the most beautiful by far. The most beautiful of all was such a painting as Nika could make, such roses and trees and the meadow with the clear water. Then Cornelli's eyes closed; she could still see the roses before her and then she looked up full of reverence at Nika, who was standing beside her and looked like a queen, so tall and beautiful, and Cornelli thought:

"If she would only speak a single friendly word to me," then Nika turned to her and said: "You are a four-cornered and stupid Cornelli."

CORNELLI

Cornelli saw and heard this but it was all in a dream.

Agnes said to her sister: "If Cornelli would only say something! You don't know in the least what is in her! How could Dino find her so entertaining and form such a friendship with her? She just sits there and doesn't speak a word."

"That is the least thing," replied Nika, "but it is terrible the way she looks, exactly like a wild barbarian. I don't understand at all why our Mamma did not brush back all the hair at once away from her face."

CHAPTER IX

A GREAT CHANGE

MUX had hardly opened his eyes the next morning, when he wanted to go to Cornelli immediately with his book; it had been decided so the evening before. But first he had to submit to the customary morning ordeal before he attained his object. Then he ran smoothly combed and washed rosy as a fresh apple into the living-room. To be sure there sat Cornelli already in a corner silent and listening intently to Agnes's piano practice. He rushed upon her; the book was already in her hands.

"There, now we will read the whole day long and then tell stories," he exclaimed with delight, "the others have to go right away to school."

But before came breakfast. Mux had forgotten this for the first time. Then the girls went away, but after that Dino knocked and desired to have Cornelli come to see him. Mux

CORNELLI

set up a great screaming and would not stop until Cornelli had promised that as soon as Dino had to sleep to-day, she would stay with Mux for a long time. He grumbled away when Cornelli left the room, and she was surprised anew that anybody could like her so much. It did her more good than anything else.

Dino asked if Cornelli would read something to him too, since she had been so willing to read to Mux from his picture-book.

“Have you too as interesting stories?” Cornelli asked hesitatingly, while she remembered her beautiful books, in which there was so much she could not understand, so that she preferred to let them all alone.

“Yes, I think so, you shall see,” said Dino. “Take down the book called: ‘About Amusing Journeys.’ There are pictures in it too, only not so large as in the other and they are not colored, but so comical that you have to laugh all the time.”

Cornelli took down the book, and to be sure,

A GREAT CHANGE

soon after her laughter was heard again and again so clear that the mother smiled with satisfaction and said to herself: "No, indeed, all is not yet lost there."

So the week passed. Cornelli spent almost all her time in reading, sometimes to Dino, and then again to Mux. In this way she became more and more interested in what she was doing and if Mux happened to want her to play soldiers, Cornelli would say: "You can do that very well alone, only let me read, then I will tell you about it afterwards."

She had soon read the entire thick book through. Cornelli had not come any nearer to the girls. Nika had barely spoken to her. Saturday morning Dino's mother stepped into his room just as Cornelli had finished reading such an amusing story that they both were laughing heartily at the recollection.

"How is it now, children?" she said. "Tomorrow Cornelli's father expects to hear if he shall come and take her home, or if he shall leave

CORNELLI

her with us for another week. Cornelli must decide herself; we all should like to keep her with us a while longer."

"Don't go! Don't go! Say he mustn't come for a long time!" urged Mux who had slipped in behind his mother and was holding Cornelli as fast as if her Papa was on the other side already wanting to take her away.

"No, no, Cornelli, you are not going away yet," Dino added. "To-morrow I am going to get up for the first time; you must be here then and see if I can still walk. And after that you must stay until I go to school; isn't that so, Cornelli? So you will not go away, will you?"

"You mustn't urge Cornelli so hard," said his mother, "perhaps she would like to go home, and your urging prevents her from saying so."

But Cornelli was so delighted to have them both urge her, that she had no doubt as to what she wanted to do.

"I should like to stay here very much," she said.

A GREAT CHANGE

“Oh, that is great!” exclaimed Dino, “and ask to have her stay two weeks longer, Mamma, or three, it is so pleasant to have Cornelli here.”

“I will ask her Papa to let his little daughter be with us longer,” said his mother. “I will not decide the time, that is for her father to do.”

“Yes, ‘longer’ is exactly right, then we can always ask for a little more and say, we had thought ‘longer’ meant that,” said Dino.

When Dino’s rest hour came and Cornelli was sitting with Mux, both felt so happy over the new extension of her visit, that Mux opened the piano and asked Cornelli to play, so that they could sing a song together. Cornelli could not play at all but she was willing to sing with him, she said, only he must suggest a song. Mux did not know any.

“Sing one, then perhaps I shall know it,” he proposed.

Cornelli was in the right mood to sing again. She began and with her clear full voice sang her song to Mux, who listened full of amazement.

CORNELLI

Snow on the meadow
And snow everywhere,
Snow above me, snow below me—
For more I don't care!
Hurrah, hurrah!
For more I don't care!

Oh, sun high in heaven,
Cuckoo in the trees,
Buttercups by the torrent—
Come soon, won't you please!
Hurrah, hurrah!
Come soon, won't you please!

His lays the finch warbles,
Round the roof swallows dart.
I too fly and keep singing—
Myriad joys fill my heart!
Hurrah, hurrah!
Myriad joys fill my heart!

Suddenly the door burst open. Agnes rushed in.

“Why didn't you say anything about it?” she screamed from the threshold. “Now what do you say to that! Why haven't you ever said a word about it?”

A GREAT CHANGE

“What should I have said?” asked Cornelli frightened.

“You mustn’t be frightened,” said Mux consolingly. “I will help you, if she tries to do anything to you.”

“Don’t be so supernaturally stupid, Mux,” his sister flung at him and was going to run into the next room, but her mother was already standing on the threshold. “Did you hear it, Mother? Come out and let Cornelli sing the song once more!”

“I heard it and was delighted and surprised,” said her mother stepping towards Cornelli. “You have a voice, dear child, that we should like to hear again. Have you sung very often?”

“Oh yes,” said Cornelli, “Martha has taught me a great many songs, but ——”

“But what?” interrupted Agnes. “Now I know what a voice you have. Now I must go at once to my music lesson, but this evening you must sing with me and in good earnest. There will be no more ‘buts.’”

CORNELLI

Agnes rushed away again.

“ You will sing with us this evening, will you not, Cornelli? ” said the mother kindly. “ Now we really know how it sounds, why should you still have any ‘but’? ”

“ Because I am afraid I can’t sing right; it doesn’t really sound at all well, ” replied Cornelli.

“ But why should you be afraid? ” asked the mother. “ You know us all now quite well. ”

“ Because I am not like Agnes and Nika, and can’t do anything like them and don’t look as they do, ” said Cornelli, while she wrinkled her forehead in the old way so that it could be seen through the thick hair covering it.

The mother said nothing more; she went out.

“ Just stay with me, then you needn’t be afraid, ” said Mux protectingly. “ I am not afraid of anything in the whole world—except in the dark, ” he added immediately, as he saw Cornelli’s searching eyes looking at him from under her locks of hair; he felt as if she looked through

A GREAT CHANGE

him. "No, not even then if you will always stay with me," he ended triumphantly.

Agnes finished her school-work that day earlier than usual.

She rushed to the piano. "Come here, Cornelli," she called to her, "Mux must entertain himself; now we will sing."

Cornelli came.

"Now I will sing the first verse of this song, and then you sing with me," Agnes began. "The moon has risen."

"Oh, I knew that song long ago; shall I sing the alto?" asked Cornelli.

"What! Do you sing alto? Can you really? That would be splendid beyond comprehension. Now sing out!" said Agnes quite excited.

The two sang alone for Nika had not yet finished her studies and it was not time for their mother to join in the evening singing. Agnes wanted to try the new voice first. Nika was sitting quite absorbed in her work. Her mother came in and out of the room. Agnes was

CORNELLI

singing with her, so Cornelli did not feel that any one was listening and sang out clear and free with all her full voice. Agnes grew more and more interested; it sounded as if a whole chorus were in there.

The mother stood still in the room, Nika looked up in astonishment from her work and listened. When the song was ended, Agnes had to clap her hands with delight.

“ You have a voice like a bell, Cornelli,” she exclaimed. “ Oh, if I had such a voice! Oh, what wouldn’t I sing! Do you know many more songs? Now tell us all about it!”

Cornelli turned the leaves in the singing book. She knew many more of the old songs it contained; she had sung them all with Martha.

Agnes exclaimed for joy: “ Now our evening singing will not be peeping any more. Now everything will be different—quite different! ” she exclaimed and rushed to the cupboard, for a new and delightful thought had already come to her.

A GREAT CHANGE

She brought out different music; they were duets which she could sing only at her music lessons, but never at home; Nika couldn't sing them with her.

"Come, Cornelli, just try to sing with me what you afterwards have to sing alone; then I will sing my own part. See, there are the notes, you can follow your part," instructed Agnes and began to sing.

Cornelli knew little about the notes, although Herr Malinger had struggled with her over this branch of knowledge. But she had a fine ear and could follow the melody immediately. They began with the easiest piece. Cornelli grasped the tune at once; she also noticed as readily, when to come in and when to pause. A second piece was also undertaken and then a third. They began from the beginning over again, and very soon both girls were really singing in good earnest.

"Once more! Once more!" urged Agnes again and again, and each time it went a little

CORNELLI

better, finally it went perfectly. Agnes jumped up from her stool in delight.

“ You are quite wonderful, Cornelli,” she exclaimed. “ Who would have thought it! Don’t go home yet! Stay on with us and we will sing every day! Did you hear it, Mamma? ”

The mother said she had and that she and Dino were delighted with the singing. He had asked to have his door open as soon as he had heard the singing.

“ Do you know what, Cornelli; early to-morrow we will hurry to study a festival duet together, in order to celebrate Dino’s coming into the living-room again for the first time.”

Cornelli agreed to this.

The mother then said that they must sing their evening hymn, as they always did at the end of the day. On account of their practising songs she had postponed the ending very much beyond the usual time.

Agnes decided that they must not end this day with a quiet evening hymn, but should sing

A GREAT CHANGE

a song of praise and thanksgiving and immediately started one, in which the others gladly joined.

Cornelli was so delighted at the unexpected pleasure and Agnes's great friendliness that she sat on the bed in her little room for a long time, wondering why she could not be really happy, although almost every one in the house treated her so affectionately. But she soon realized why it was. She still suffered because she looked different from every one else, and because she feared it would grow worse and worse, until she would not be able to hide it any longer; then they would all think as Mux did, although they would not speak about it.

The next morning, when Cornelli had just risen from her bed, the mother came in to her little room. "Cornelli," she said, taking the child by the hand, "you make us all very happy; you have given my sick Dino so many happy hours, and entertained restless little Mux so well that he can hardly be without you any longer.

CORNELLI

I should like to do you some kindness. I should like to make this day very festive and remove forever what is disfiguring you."

The mother had already begun to arrange the child's hair.

"Oh no, no, only not that!" she cried out. "Then everything is at an end. I must go home. I want to go home! They will all laugh at me and couldn't bear me any longer. Oh, you don't know how it is."

"I know all about it, dear child," said the mother calmly. "Dino has told me all about it. But you know, Cornelli, that I am fond of you, don't you? You know that I would not do anything that would hurt you and not do you good. You are mistaken about something, which I should like to remedy."

"No, no, it is no mistake, really not," cried Cornelli full of distress. "My cousin told me and Fräulein Grideelen too. They saw it and I know it. Oh, don't brush my hair away!"

"Cornelli," continued the mother calmly, "the

A GREAT CHANGE

ladies told you they saw little horns on your forehead, which would grow bigger and bigger, if you scowled in such a gloomy way. You are distressed to have it so and because you think it will grow worse and worse. You have understood it in a different way from what they meant. They wanted to tell you, if you wrinkled your forehead so, you would look as if you had little horns, in order to keep you from doing so. Their intention was good, but you didn't understand it right. But you understand me now and know that I can only mean well for you. Let me now do what will make you happy. Will you really trust me? Would I do anything to make you look shocking in other people's eyes, as you think it would be? You can't believe that, my dear child."

Cornelli still sighed.

Meanwhile the mother had worked on with a clever hand; the thick hair was now beautifully parted; on both sides of the clear white part in the middle lay the waves of brown hair and

CORNELLI

framed her snow-white forehead, which had not come in contact with any sunlight all Summer long, it had been covered so thickly. The mother wound two thick braids, which she had just finished plaiting, round her head; they made a perfect crown. The mother then looked smilingly into Cornelli's face. Her altered appearance delighted her heart.

“Now come with me; we will see if the children notice the difference,” she said and took Cornelli by the hand to lead her out.

Cornelli was glad to go into the room with the mother, for she would hardly have dared to go alone. Even so she still cast down her eyes shyly when the door opened.

Mux was already waiting for his companion, and ran to meet her.

“What have you done, Cornelli?” he said in sudden amazement. “You look very neat and beautiful around your forehead, and your eyes shine like a canary bird's and you don't look like an owl any longer.”

A GREAT CHANGE

“No, but Cornelli, you are entirely changed,” exclaimed Agnes, “let me see! Make a little room, Mux! No, no one would know you any longer! It is very fortunate that you have done that; now it is a real pleasure to look at you.”

“Your mother did it,” said Cornelli, as if bewildered by their expressions of delight.

Nika too looked at Cornelli. “You are an entirely different girl from before,” she said. “How did you manage to be so?”

These words were spoken in such an impressive tone that Cornelli felt a deeper and deeper sense of comfort that she kept suppressing from shyness. It seemed hardly possible; could she really be freed forever from her terrible distress?

Then Agnes urged Cornelli to come and practise singing, so that Dino’s getting up again should be festively celebrated. Cornelli agreed and the practising began and went on and on, for Agnes could not have enough of going through all possible duets with the newly dis-

CORNELLI

covered voice; this she had never been able to try before for lack of an alto voice.

Dino appeared for the first time at dinner, very pale but very lively.

“Hurrah, Cornelli!” he called out after he had come into the living-room. “Now you look as you did in Illerbach, when you forgot that you had to pull the curtains over your forehead, and even much better! How well you look, Cornelli! Once more, hurrah and joy unequalled!”

But what followed was a great surprise to Dino. Suddenly the festive song rang out and Cornelli’s voice sounded so full and clear that Dino kept nudging Nika and saying softly: “Do you hear it now? Do you see it now? Do you notice it?”

It was very evident that the two had not had the same opinion about Cornelli until now.

It was a real festival to-day. In Cornelli’s heart the feeling of delightful contentment drove out every other sensation. Her natural cheerfulness broke forth as if freed from fetters, and

A GREAT CHANGE

influenced all the others to such happiness and shouts of joy that the mother herself joined in and kept looking again and again with astonishment and delight at her girls, who usually showed so little undisturbed pleasure, and at her Dino, who looked so fresh and well with his expression of beaming happiness. But secretly she had to sigh again and say to herself: "How long will this happiness stay with us! Hard times surely lie before us all!"

"Didn't I tell you right?" Dino called to his sisters, as they were separating to go to bed, and Cornelli had already disappeared. How many times had one or the other since Cornelli's arrival said confidentially to him:

"What you find so attractive and entertaining in your friend we can't understand."

Cornelli stood as in a dream as soon as she was alone. What had happened to her? Was it really true that the great trouble which had burdened her so long and taken away all her happiness had suddenly disappeared and forever? But

CORNELLI

the mother had said decidedly it had all been a mistake, and the children had all shown that it was. So she was the same again as before and could be happy once more without any distress in the background. Cornelli was full of delight and thankfulness.

“ Oh, how good the dear Lord has made everything for me,” she said in her heart and remembered how distressfully she had prayed that He would prevent her from having to go away to the city and now He had really let her go to the city, but in such a different way from what she had feared. Exactly through going away her great trouble had been taken from her. Yes, Martha had really been right. Cornelli would never forget it. She would never again insist upon anything, but only ask the dear Lord to make everything right according to His will. Now she had to thank Him so heartily and deeply that it was quite late before she could lie down to sleep, and then stayed awake a long time, but only from excessive joy.

A GREAT CHANGE

“I have something special to tell you to-day, Cornelli,” said the mother, when the family were sitting peacefully together the next evening after supper. “You know I wrote your father; we all asked that he would leave you for some time longer with us. He has answered me that he should very much like it if his little daughter would stay a whole year with us and take all the instruction I let my daughters have. But you shall be free, Cornelli, to write your father yourself how this proposal strikes you.”

“You will stay with us, Cornelli, surely you will stay with us, won’t you?” exclaimed Dino immediately. “You stay with us until Summer, then I will go home with you to Illerbach. Then I am going back again to kind Frau Martha’s; that is already decided.”

“And I am too,” said Mux emphatically, “and you know, Cornelli,” he whispered in her ear, “I will stay with you always in your house, and then Dino can go all alone to old Martha’s.”

Agnes was charmed at this prospect. “Oh,

CORNELLI

how splendid! how splendid!” she exclaimed again and again. “Now we will take singing lessons together, and learn the same songs, and sing everything together at home. Oh, that is unspeakably delightful!”

Nika said in agreement: “You must write your father that you would like to stay with us, Cornelli, we are really only just beginning to know you.”

Cornelli’s eyes sparkled in ever increasing delight. They all wanted to keep her, all of them! And yet the thought arose, if her father wanted to let her stay there for a year, then that was the time she was to be in the school, which he had intended for her. Oh, how different it was from what she had supposed and had feared so much! “Oh, I should be so glad to stay here, so glad!” she said suddenly in great excitement. “May I write to Papa immediately?”

The mother thought this was quite right. She sat down beside Cornelli, as she wanted to write also to her father; the letters should go together.

A GREAT CHANGE

Two days later when the Director in Illerbach sat at the breakfast table, he opened before all the other mail lying there, the thick letter which came from the city. There were two inside the envelope. He read one after the other in surprise. Frau Halm wrote that all the members of her family had been delighted with his proposal for Cornelli to remain longer in her house, for they all had become very fond of her. The beloved guest would leave a real aching void in her family if she went away.

Cornelli's letter read:

“DEAR PAPA:

“I would like to stay here very much. I cannot tell you how dear the mother and all the children are to me. I should also like to learn a very, very great deal; Nika and Agnes know so much and are so clever. I wish I could study everything they do. If you would allow me to do that I should be very terribly happy! Give much love to Martha and Esther and Mathis.

“YOUR CORNELLI.”

CORNELLI

The Director shook his head when he had read the letter through. "There is something uncanny about that!" he said to himself. "Hardly two weeks have passed since they said to me that this child could never be trained, for I could see myself her stubborn, incomprehensibly perverse nature. And now! Frankly I do not really dare take literally what perhaps was written in a moment of excitement."

Nevertheless the Director was very happy over the news. His greatest anxiety was taken away for the present. Somebody wanted to keep his child and it was a woman, who together with her children had made the most favorable impression on him. He decided to wait and see how long she would get along with the stubborn child.

The mother had soon arranged everything for Cornelli to begin a rightly ordered school instruction. Agnes urged with fiery enthusiasm that she should begin taking music lessons immediately, for she thought that was the most im-

A GREAT CHANGE

portant thing of all. Cornelli desired it, herself. She wanted most of all to study immediately everything that Nika and Agnes did, and with great enthusiasm and fresh strength plunged into every subject presented to her.

Dino had now recovered and had begun to go to school again. So every morning the little troop of four children, talking in the liveliest fashion, went down the street to different schools. When they met again on their way home, their conversation was still more lively, for then they had to tell each other about the various experiences they had just had at school. Cornelli was always foremost in this, for she could picture everything so comically and make it so graphic that usually all four came up the stairs with loud laughter. So the present arrangement of things was quite delightful for them all, only not for Mux, for his companion, Cornelli, was entirely taken away from him. In his great indignation he would call down to the four laughing schoolmates as they came, one behind the other, up the

CORNELLI

stairs: "I would burn all the schools if I only had them."

"But not all the teachers too, Mux," said Dino, "or else they would order something quite different for you, from what you tell about Agnes."

The door between Cornelli's little room and the sisters' sleeping-room had been opened and now always stood open, as all three had desired it. There was no longer an evening when they did not have so many things to tell each other that the last moment had to be utilized for it.

Cornelli had nothing but admiration for Nika and everything she did. Cornelli could not understand why such a person as Nika, about whom everything was beautiful and who could do everything that was beautiful, should have a trouble, but again and again she had thought about it, for Nika often looked, as could plainly be seen, as if she must be suffering from some secret grief. Agnes must have been carrying hers about with her still, for often in the midst of the most en-

A GREAT CHANGE

joyable laughter she would suddenly stop and say:

“ Yes, you may well be jolly, Cornelli, it is all right for you, but for us, yes for us!” Then Agnes would frown so that Cornelli could not help thinking her trouble must hurt her very much. She would have liked so much to help her, but she never asked what troubled her. Cornelli knew perfectly well how glad she herself had been when nobody asked what was the matter with her. To-day, red and more excited than ever before, Agnes came running home from her music lesson. “ Mamma,” she called from the door, “ the teacher gave out the pieces we have to play for examination. Mine is the hardest of all, and he said to me as he gave it to me: ‘ I am going to make something out of you.’ ”

Then Agnes took her music book, flung it from her as if it were her worst enemy, and ran away. Cornelli full of sympathy followed after her.

Agnes rushed into her room, threw herself into a chair and sobbed aloud. With the most heart-

CORNELLI

felt sympathy Cornelli threw her arms around her neck.

“ Oh, how well I know how it is, Agnes, when you have to cry so,” she said, “ but why do you do so now when your teacher has just been praising you? ”

Then Agnes burst forth: “ Yes, what good is it to me? and what good would it do, if I should play well and practise gladly day and night! No good at all. After another year we must go away, Nika ar I I, then everything will be at an end. She cannot paint any more, and I take no more music lessons. We shall have to become tailoresses, and I cannot go through the higher classes at school; there won’t be any more time for that. I would a thousand times rather go through the world and sing a song before the houses for a penny—indeed I would! ”

“ Can’t your mother do anything to prevent it? ” asked Cornelli, for her mother’s help in her great trouble was still very fresh in her mind.

“ No, she cannot. It is hard enough for her

A GREAT CHANGE

anyway. There is nobody in the world who can help us if the overseer will not," exclaimed Agnes, " and he says it can't be any different."

This explanation depressed Cornelli very much. So there was nothing to be done about it. Now she understood why Nika so often had sad eyes. This was really a great trouble; it went deeply to Cornelli's heart also. When Agnes had one of her attacks of despondency, she did not recover for several days. Then Nika did not say a word either and their mother always looked sadly and troubled at her children.

Dino too became silent. He knew very well what troubled his mother and sisters. He would have liked so much to help his sisters, but he did not know a way to do so. Then Cornelli could no longer laugh and talk gaily, for she knew so well what it was to be burdened with a trouble.

CHAPTER X

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

WINTER had come. The days were so full of regular work for all the members of the household in the top apartment, that every evening, when studies were done, a universal lament was heard because the day was already over again and they had no more time left. Foremost among them was Agnes, who looked as if she wanted to spit fire from indignation, when everything came to an end again and they had to go to bed.

“We lose half our lives in sleep,” she often exclaimed angrily. “If you would allow us to sing all night, Mamma, we should be all the fresher the next day for our other work, for then we could sing to our hearts’ delight and not always have to stop when we are in full swing.” But their mother was not of that opinion. The night must always be reserved for sleep.

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

Cornelli's singing was always a new delight to Agnes. Without effort and easily as a bird, Cornelli sang everything she had heard once and with a voice so resonant and clear that every one delighted in it. In the whole school there was no alto voice to be found like hers, so rich and at the same time so true. Her teacher said so himself and at the general singing lesson wanted to give Cornelli the first place directly in front of him, her voice was the surest leader in the chorus.

In the middle of the Winter, the Director wrote to Frau Halm that since he knew his little girl was so well provided for, he had decided to undertake immediately a journey which would keep him abroad for some time. He had been obliged to cut short his last journey in order not to keep his kind representatives too long in his house. Owing to this sudden decision he would not be able to carry out his plan to go at once to the city and visit her house.

Cornelli thought Spring had never come so quickly before, as after this Winter, when one

CORNELLI

day a warm wind blew through the streets and the melting snow dropped from all the roofs. She was coming alone from school; to-day she was free earlier than the others. A little bird was singing from a sunny roof jubilantly up to the blue sky. Cornelli stood still and listened. A sunbeam fell into the narrow street, the loosened snow was dropping softly. The little bird sang on and on so sweetly, so familiarly. Before Cornelli's eyes stood the young beech-trees up in the woods, covered with their first green foliage, violets were coming forth under the hedge, the first violets, in the garden by the house yellow crocuses were shining, and red primroses, and the birds were singing everywhere in the trees—it was so beautiful at home! so beautiful! Oh, to see it all again, to hear it all again, to go home again; how beautiful it must be there! Cornelli ran along the street and up all the stairs, in order to reach her writing case as soon as possible. Then she sat down and wrote:

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

“DEAR PAPA:

“It is surely more beautiful now at home than anywhere else. May I come home soon? The violets must really be in bloom and everything green in the woods, and then all the little flowers will come in the garden, and then the roses and the berries and the forget-me-nots in the meadow. Oh, it is nowhere else as it is at home! I should like so much to show it all to Nika and Agnes and their mother, and let Mux see the kid. Dino already knows the garden and the meadows. He wants so much to come back to Illerbach again. Oh, if only I can see it all again soon! Many hundred kisses from your daughter,

“CORNELLI.”

Not for three weeks did an answer come from her father. He wrote that his journey had lasted much longer than he had originally expected. He was very glad that his daughter had suddenly become aware that she had a lovely home, but she must not leave her school immediately for that. She must stay in the city until her Summer vacation, for he would be obliged to

CORNELLI

be away until that time. Then he said she might invite the family, in which she was so well off, mother and children, for the vacation. There would be room enough in the house for them all and he, as well as Cornelli, owed Frau Hahn great gratitude.

At first Cornelli was a little disappointed that it would be so long before she could see the garden and the meadow and beech woods, as her longing for them had increased more and more. But the prospect of having them all with her, the whole family with Dino and his mother too, delighted her so much that the disappointment about it disappeared. But still greater was the delight when at the dinner-table she announced her father's invitation and then from all sides a perfect jubilation burst forth. The girls had had no other expectation than to spend this Summer like every other, without any special vacation, in their hot apartment on the top floor. And now came the prospect of long weeks roaming about in wonderful Illerbach, about which

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

Dino could not tell them enough. And besides they were to live in Cornelli's house and garden, which according to Dino's description were the most beautiful in the world. Agnes screamed aloud with delight, Nika's face lighted up as from bright sunshine. Their mother was greatly moved with gratitude and joy. How often had she secretly worried about being able to bring it about to send her Dino to Illerbach for a real recuperation, or having to cut short the time so that there was little hope of his getting strong again. And now suddenly the dear Lord had taken away not only all her anxiety, but changed it to such a superabundant blessing. Dino smiled with deepest contentment and said over and over again:

“ You only ought to know how beautiful everything is there! That garden! Those flowers! those trees, the stable, those horses! Oh, all Illerbach.”

But Mux screamed louder and louder: “ Take me with you too, Cornelli, take me too!” For

CORNELLI

he could not realize that he was actually going with them. There were still many days yet, even many weeks to pass before the beautiful time would come, but it would not be hard to go through what had to be done with this splendid prospect before them all.

It was different with Cornelli. Her longing for her home grew stronger and more fervent every day and whenever she saw a green spot or tree anywhere, the garden at home, the meadows and the flowers in Illerbach came so vividly before her eyes that the desire to see it all once more, to go home again, became a real pain. Finally it seemed as if the day would never, never come when she would see her home again. But it came nevertheless. Although none of them could believe it, they were so delighted, it was really there. The big trunk was carried away in a cart. The whole family went behind it to the station. Last of all followed Trine, looking much astonished, for she could not realize that she too was going on a journey away from home, al-

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

though she was then on the way. The day before, Cornelli had begged so urgently for her, that Frau Halm could not resist her. Cornelli promised to answer to her father herself for the unexpected guest. Mux was so excited that he was continually running in front of one or the other and preventing them from walking.

“ You stupid Mux! ” exclaimed Dino, “ if you do that, we shall naturally be too late at the station, and lose the train.”

This prospect disconcerted Mux. He rushed away like a crazy person, and Dino had to run to catch him, for Mux did not know the way at all, he was running ahead in order not to be too late. Finally the station was successfully reached. They climbed into the train and then were travelling out into the country. The sun was beaming over all the fields and all the roads; not a cloud was in the sky. Cornelli sat by an open window and looked out intently. Two hours and a little more were quickly passed; here they had to get out.

CORNELLI

“There he comes! there he comes!” shouted Cornelli, and rushed towards the road leading into the valley.

Mathis stopped his lively stepping bays. Cornelli was already standing before them.

“How are you, Mathis? I have come back again; is everything all right at home?” Cornelli called to the coachman as he jumped down.

“Welcome, Cornelli, welcome home,” he said beaming with pleasure, for his master’s child was his great pride. “But how you have grown, Cornelli! Hm, hm, how Cornelli has changed!”

He shook her hand again in his delight, then he went to open the carriage door. The family had now joined them.

“Oh, there is somebody I know, that is the young gentleman who was here last year,” said Mathis again, for Dino had stepped up to shake hands with him, “but you looked better when you were with us, yes, it is really true, much better.”

“I really believe that, Mathis, when I had such

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

good milk from the stable every morning and could drink it out in the beautiful fresh morning air," said Dino. "In the city it was different."

The mother had now climbed in; the girls followed. Mux stood motionless in front of the two shining bays, staring at them. He was not to be taken away from looking at them.

"They are coming with us," promised Mathis, who was well pleased with the little boy's unconcealed admiration. "You can see them every day and ride on them to the spring."

This availed. They were all now in the carriage. Trine sat with Mathis on the box and they went flying into the upper valley.

"Mother, Mother, see the red marguerites," exclaimed Nika, "see the golden buttercups! Oh, all the blue forget-me-nots!"

Cornelli jumped up. She could no longer sit still. She had to look in front of her, behind her and in every direction. The meadows had never before been so full of flowers of every color. Every moment Cornelli cried out with delight.

CORNELLI

Then the carriage drove into the courtyard. Cornelli jumped out first.

“Esther, Esther, how do you do!” she cried to her old friend who had come in dignified silence, and in a spotless white apron, to welcome the guests.

“Now I am at home again; is everything just the same as it always has been? Is the garden still the same? And Martha and her house?”

“Yes, indeed, Cornelli, and God bless you, Cornelli,” replied Esther, looking at her. “But you have changed, mercy sakes, how you have changed. You are not the same any more.”

Cornelli had already run into the house, to the living-room, to her closet. Everything remained the same as it had been before. Cornelli rushed out again to the mother, to lead her in. The child’s face was actually beaming full of joy.

Over in his workroom her father was standing, absorbed in his writing. He had just heard the carriage rolling along. He jumped up.

“There they are already,” he said to himself,

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

threw his working coat over the chair and put on a good one. Then he went out of the foundry and across to the courtyard.

“Oh, my God,” he sighed, for still fresh in his mind was the recollection of what an impression his child had made on him, when he returned a year ago from his journey, and Cornelli stood before him, shy, estranged, with averted eyes and looking like a barbarian who never combed her hair.

“What will the child be like now!”

He went into the living-room. Cornelli looked towards him. The Director stopped short; he stood motionless there, as if he could not realize what he saw with his eyes before him. Cornelli then rushed towards him.

“Oh, Papa! Papa! It is so lovely to be at home! Everything is just the same as before. Oh, I am so glad to be at home again.”

The father wanted to embrace his little daughter but he held her from him; he must look at her once more. Tears came to his eyes.

CORNELLI

“Cornelli, my child, you look at me the way your mother did. How like your mother you have grown!” he said with the greatest emotion, taking the child in his arms. “How is it possible! How you have changed! How did you become so?”

“The mother knows about it, Papa, the mother has helped me,” said Cornelli, with sparkling eyes, bringing forward the mother who had stepped back with her children.

The Director went towards her.

“Be heartily welcome to my house, Frau Halm, both you and your children,” he said, in the heartiest way, greeting one after the other. Then taking Cornelli again by the hand, he continued with emotion: “What have you brought back to me here? What have you done with my daughter? How was it possible? Is this the same child that I took to you?”

He had to look again and again at Cornelli. Did she really look so? Was it not a fleeting vision? Was it not fancy? Was this his child, Cor-

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

nelli? Her father held her hand fast and kept looking again and again into her shining eyes. It seemed as if he couldn't believe it.

Careful Esther then brought in all kinds of dishes for the table had to be laid. At the door she announced to her master that the guests' rooms were all ready if the ladies would like to go to them.

The mother was glad to accept the proposal for herself and her daughters, but Cornelli said:

“Papa, may I run quickly over to Martha's? I will be back again soon.”

The father nodded in assent.

Dino also requested the same permission. He could not stay behind, if she was going to kind Martha's.

The children wanted to run ahead, but Cornelli could not stir. The meadows were completely strewn with all the flowers, which she had not seen for so long. She had to gather the red marguerites here, the yellow buttercups there, and the blue forget-me-nots she could not

CORNELLI

let alone. But Dino urged her to come along, as they must be home again soon, and the flowers would still be there the next day.

Martha had already learned that Cornelli was expected to-day and with whom she was coming. She had already been watching in the direction of the courtyard and garden, to see if she could catch a glimpse of Cornelli, or perhaps one of Dino. Now both were coming together hurrying up the steps. Martha ran out. This was Dino, exactly as she had known him. But Cornelli—Martha looked up at the child and pressed her hands and wanted to say something, but bright tears were running down her cheeks; she could say nothing.

“Oh, Martha, I was so glad to come home, and then to run to see you immediately,” Cornelli then exclaimed. “Aren’t you glad too? Oh, I am so happy, so happy!”

“I am too. Oh, I am too,” asserted Martha. “It is only the joy over you and the remembrance. Oh, how much you look like your

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

mother, and how different from when you went away, Cornelli! The dear Lord has blessed your stay in the city, so that it seems like a miracle to me. How I have prayed for it!"

Then she had to shake Dino's hand again and again, but in her great delight at seeing him once more was mingled a little anxiety.

"Why are you so thin and pale, Dino?" she asked anxiously. "Last year your cheeks were fuller."

"That is why I have come back again to Illerbach," he replied cheerfully, "and now you must be glad with us, Frau Martha, we are so awfully happy to be here again, Cornelli and I. Oh, it is exactly as beautiful here as last year, and we will come to see you every day. I feel quite at home here."

Martha was so touched she could say nothing more. There was Cornelli before her, as fresh and happy as ever. All the incomprehensible sadness and disfigurement in the child had disappeared and an expression had come into her

CORNELLI

merry eyes which touched the old woman's heart very deeply. The young mother had looked at her like that. And there stood Dino with the old familiarity and speaking such friendly words to her she could not realize the good fortune.

"Now we must go, Martha," said Cornelli, "but you know how it has always been; I came running to see you every day and I will do so again."

"And I too! And I too," said Dino, and as they ran along together Martha, standing on her steps, her eyes filled with tears of joy, watched them as long as she could catch a glimpse of them.

With folded hands she gazed after them until they had disappeared.

"Oh, dear Lord," she said softly, "my heart is overflowing with gratitude. You have guided everything that was hard for the child; everything has been for the best."

As the children came into the house, Cornelli said: "Go in, Dino, I will come immediately."

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

Then she turned and went into the kitchen.

“ I surely thought our Cornelli would find her way to the kitchen,” said Esther with satisfaction. “ Come, let me have a good look at you, Cornelli.”

Esther placed herself directly in front of the child.

“ How you have grown in the year, and you look so neat and your hair so beautifully combed now. Yes indeed, every one ought to see our Cornelli.”

Cornelli became a little red. She thought how she had looked when she went away. She knew now perfectly well how it had all been and how stubbornly she had resisted all the good advice of the others.

“ Esther, I must tell you something. Where is Trine who came with us?” Cornelli then asked.

“ I told her to go out behind the house and look at the vegetable garden for a while,” said Esther. “ She was in my way everywhere in the kitchen; she doesn’t look quite bright.”

CORNELLI

“No, she isn’t really so. You see, Esther, I want to tell you something about Trine. You will surely be good to her, won’t you?” said Cornelli quite imploringly. “You see, Trine is four-cornered and stupid but she can’t help it. Perhaps you don’t know how it is but I know very well, and if you are very kind to her, then she won’t feel so bad that she has to be so. Will you really do me the favor?”

Esther looked quite astonished at the child, who then ran away to the living-room to the others.

“How did such thoughts ever come to our little girl?” Esther asked of herself. “One would think our Cornelli had been down in the world herself, and not the Director’s daughter, who can have whatever she wants.”

Esther was obliged to shake her head from time to time for a long while, but she wanted Cornelli to know that she was the only daughter of the house, and could give the orders, for Esther was proud of Cornelli’s position. She

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

wanted to show how she would carry out her young mistress's wishes.

After the first happy meal the children ran, as they were allowed, out to the garden. They knew everything that was to be seen there. How enthusiastically Dino had described the garden with the flowers of all colors, with the red peaches trained against the wall! The fruit-laden pear- and apple-trees, the big stable beyond with the shining cows, the splendid horses; now they were to see them all with their own eyes. All five with the same longing rushed away.

The Director was still sitting at his black coffee, and Frau Halm was glad to sit with him.

“Now, Herr Hellmut,” she said when the door had closed behind the children, “let me at last express my most heartfelt gratitude for your great kindness.”

“What? What? You want to thank me, Frau Halm?” here interrupted the Director. “You thank me? Now let me speak! How can I accept the thanks I owe to you? How much

CORNELLI

you have done for my child! How have you corrected, changed and developed so this stubborn, self-willed girl! How my daughter looks! I have to keep gazing at her to see if it can be really so. How was it possible! And how can I thank you! How can I repay you for the trouble, care, patience—oh, I do not know how you have accomplished it all with Cornelli so that you could give her back to me like this!"

"No, Herr Hellmut, the matter does not really stand so," said Frau Halm. "Cornelli has cost me neither trouble, great care, nor patience. If I have brought out the good side of her nature, and could through love help in her delightful development, that is all I have done. Not for one moment has Cornelli made my task difficult. We have all grown so fond of her that we were pained to think the time could be near when she would leave our house. I shall never forget what a lovely time Cornelli gave my Dino, especially while he was sick, and to my little boy who needed companionship, through her invaria-

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

ble good humor and friendliness. Yes, Herr Hellmut, you have a dear child."

The Director jumped up in excitement. He strode back and forth in the room. It was a different kind of excitement from that which had impelled him up and down the living-room the year before.

" You do not know what you are saying to me, Frau Halm," he then said standing still in front of her; " you do not know what anguish you are taking away from me! How I have suffered from the deep reproach that I had neglected my Cornelia's child until everything was too late, until she had grown entirely spoiled and stubborn forever. And now you come and bring back the girl so that I recognize her mother in her eyes, in her expression, in her whole appearance, and you tell me that her nature is invariably cheerful, good-humored and friendly, which is exactly and entirely as my Cornelia was."

" One thing more I must say, Herr Hellmut," replied Frau Halm. " I am thoroughly con-

CORNELLI

vinced that the influence a child is under the first years is not at all a matter of indifference. I believe also that Cornelli really needed a mother's loving, guiding hand. Still I must say your Cornelli was not at all a neglected child when she came to me, and from all I know of her myself and from what Dino knows, who lived with kind Frau Martha, I must believe that this Frau Martha gave your daughter the best spiritual education that we can give to children. I hold Frau Martha in high esteem; she is a true child-educator."

"My Cornelia said so too, therefore I had confidence in her. But then the time came when I had to believe it had all failed. So I have valued too little what she was to the child. You remind me of my faults —"

Such a loud shouting then came up from the garden that both stepped to the open window.

Mux was screaming from below as if he were beside himself:

"Mamma! Mamma! Look! A live goat-

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

boy and a live goat! Come down, Mamma, and see it!"

To be sure, on the high seat of a beautiful basket carriage sat Mux, two reins in one hand, a big whip in the other. A slender young goat was pulling the wagon. Agnes and Cornelli were running as protectors beside the carriage, Dino was holding the goat firmly by the reins, so that it would not run away. All were shouting and exclaiming at the splendid drive.

Mathis was standing behind by the bushes and overseeing this first trial trip, in case his help might be necessary. He had made the carriage for Cornelli and fitted it out very beautifully. He had harnessed the goat many times so that it would behave properly when Cornelli drove it. When Mathis brought out his carriage to the children Cornelli had immediately decided it should belong especially to Mux. Then the picture which charmed Mux most in the book would become an actual fact.

Mux shouted with joy as if beside himself to

CORNELLI

his mother. She really must see the splendid carriage closer. She came out.

The Director also left the house; he went in another direction. Soon afterwards he climbed the steps leading to the little gallery where Martha was sitting in her sewing chair.

“Herr Hellmut!” she exclaimed in surprise and opened the door into her living-room, for outside there was not room enough for both of them.

He stepped inside.

“Martha, I have ruined your business, it requires compensation,” he said in a very business-like tone to Martha’s greatest astonishment. “I have made your boarder unnecessary and for all time. I have just now bought, from the farmer up above, your little house and the small piece of land here with it; so you will have more room for your flowers. Take good care of it and with the rent money give yourself a few happy days every year. Is that satisfactory to you?”

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

“Herr Hellmut, my house free and a garden besides! Oh, Herr Hellmut!”

But he did not let her say anything further. He shook her hand heartily and hurried away.

The large dark red raspberries gleamed out from among the green leaves, and the golden yellow Mirabella plums were already dropping from the heavily laden branches on the green grass. Mux swam from morning to night in uninterrupted pleasure. Every morning, early, before he had really opened his eyes, he woke his mother out of sleep by shouting in his alarm-cry:

“Mother, are we still here? Haven’t we gone away yet?”

Then the hours of the day began, each one more beautiful than the last. Mux did not know which was the loveliest. His mother had been obliged to make special stable clothes for him, for Mux not only went back and forth to the stable, but he spent the whole day in the barn, on the hayloft, with the horses, with the goat and with the milking of the cows.

CORNELLI

Mathis had become his best friend; he was always thinking of something to delight Mux, for he had a great satisfaction in the lively boy with his taste for farming. If Mathis had some necessary work to do when he could not have his little protégé with him he always found some other occupation for him.

“ Go now to the raspberry bushes for a while,” he usually said, “ but not up here; there way underneath are the finest, the very largest berries, which are not baked by the direct sunlight. And later go under the plum-tree and wait for me.”

Mux then promptly obeyed and from the red raspberries which he had properly diminished, he would stroll under the plum-tree and sit down meditatively on the grass, until Mathis appeared. As soon as Mathis came he would shake the tree so forcibly, that a flood of golden plums would roll down over Mux and he could take all he wanted.

If Mathis was not to be found at once and Dino and Cornelli were occupied with their own

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

pursuits so that nothing was to be expected from their assistance, then Mux knew still another friend, who always gave him an affectionate reception. Mux then went to Esther in the vegetable garden. Here new entertainment and delightful things awaited him. It was like a miracle to him that the green peas, the beautiful vegetables, which only came to his table at home on great occasions, hung down in such masses from the bushes. He grew very anxious at the sight of Esther as she picked a whole basket full.

When he would say to her warningly:

“Don’t take them all at once, or we sha’n’t have any more later on,” Esther would only laugh and say:

“They keep growing again. In a week there will be as many more here.”

If Mux looked somewhat askance at the huge heads of cabbage standing next, then Esther would say:

“You needn’t be afraid of them, Muxie, if they are coming to the table, I will cook them so

CORNELLI

well that the others will want them all, and you will get on your plate only bright yellow roasted potatoes which always go with them."

From the vegetable garden Mux accompanied Esther to the kitchen, where he again acquired much useful knowledge. No dish came to the table about which he could not tell how it was prepared, and knew exactly how it would taste. Mux was spending golden days.

No less golden were they for the brother and sisters. Dino and Cornelli had undertaken a great work; they were laying out Martha's garden according to their own plan and had so much to design and to carry out that the two were never to be found, no matter how hard Agnes struggled again and again for the possession of Cornelli. Dino always remained victorious and Cornelli ran away with him.

Dino had been her first friend and had kept the friendship firmly, so she remained steadfastly true. Agnes soon found consolation because she could sit at the beautiful piano and play at any

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

time as long as she desired, wholly undisturbed, and singing with Cornelli, which she always longed for, came every evening. Then the Director seated himself in the easy chair and they had to sing one song after another, for he could not have enough of it and said from time to time with beaming eyes to Frau Halm:

“The child has her mother’s voice, only her mother’s was fuller and more tender.”

Then Frau Halm’s face would shine with delight and she would say repeatedly:

“Only have a little patience, Herr Hellmut. Cornelli’s voice will be such that you will have nothing more to desire.”

Then her father would nod his head and lean back with a blissful smile in his chair. Nika was completely changed. No shadow any longer darkened her face. In continual silent happiness she roamed with her painting box from one lovely spot in the garden to another, now up to the beech woods, then to the height where the oak trees stood with the bank below, on which she

CORNELLI

would drop down and could overlook the house and garden and far out to the green valley. There Nika could sit the whole time at her beloved work and dream and work again. Nobody disturbed her, neither was she interrupted by any undesirable activities.

With inexpressible delight their mother looked at her fresh, blooming Dino, and the faces of her girls beaming with happiness, but then suddenly the thought would arise: how different it would be with all of them, when these days of happiness came to an end, and they would have to take up the life in the narrow quarters with the threatening shadows of the coming year.

The end of vacation was approaching, but nobody had much time to think about it, for a great festival had to be celebrated first. The Director's birthday was near and the mother had planned that each child should celebrate it in his or her way. It was left to them to decide how.

The mother had little Mux alone learn a beautiful verse of congratulation, which she had com-

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

posed. But it required much time and trouble before the words would stay in the little head, for he was always so full of thoughts of the barn and stable, the kitchen and the goat-carriage, and plums and beetles and ants, that nothing else would stay.

Nika needed no advice. She had long before decided what she would do, and always vanished completely, as soon as the end of a meal would allow her to disappear. Agnes and Cornelli locked the door of the music room and caused mysterious singing to be heard from it. Dino alone was undecided about his gift and said from time to time, when the others were busy with their work of preparation for the birthday and he was left alone with his mother and Mux: “What can I do, Mother?”

“Draw a picture of his lovely goat for him,” advised Mux, when the question came again. He knew how beautifully Dino could draw all kinds of animals, and he couldn’t imagine anything finer than the young goat.

CORNELLI

“Oh, you zoological goat-loving Mux!” exclaimed Dino, but in spite of his objection to the picture of the goat, Mux had given him an idea: “I will draw the two bays,” he suddenly exclaimed with delight, “one walking, the other trotting. Mathis must lead them out for me.”

Dino ran with joy to the barn. For many days he worked secretly with Mathis.

The birthday arrived.

When the Director came into the room to breakfast, such a beautiful song came from the next room that he had to go in there. Agnes and Cornelli were singing a festive song for him, and their singing was so beautiful and touching to-day that the Director could not speak. He only patted the two children with fatherly tenderness on the shoulder, then went back into the other room. Here Mux came towards him and repeated his verse properly and correctly in a loud voice. Two pictures smiled at him from the table. These were his bays, he recognized them immediately. For a good while he could not lay

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

down the sheets of paper, so great was his delight. But he had something else to look at. In the middle of the table, so large that it had to be carefully supported, stood painted in fresh colors true to nature, his house, his garden rich in trees, the meadow farther on with the view down into the valley to the distant blue mountains. The Director stood quite speechless in front of it. It was the view which from a child he had loved better than any other.

“Cornelli, come here,” her father then called to her, “look at this picture. Haven’t you a beautiful home? Don’t you love your home as much as your father loves it?”

“Oh yes, I love it, Papa, so very much,” said Cornelli, “and every day I have to think, I never knew how beautiful it was at home as I now know since I came back. Oh, how beautiful it looks in the picture there.”

“Oh, Cornelli, if only you did not have this lovely home,” exclaimed Agnes vehemently, as she was standing behind her.

CORNELLI

“Agnes,” said her mother much shocked, “what does that improper remark mean?”

The Director, also, looked in astonishment at the excited Agnes, who was casting fiery glances at the picture. What could the child mean?

“Well, you must have quarrelled very badly to wish that Cornelli did not have such a beautiful home,” he said with a secret smile.

Agnes grew crimson.

“Oh no, I did not mean that, Herr Hellmut,” she said, “certainly not. I have never quarrelled at all with Cornelli, only with Dino, because he always wants to have Cornelli for himself. But if Cornelli did not have this beautiful home, if she had such as I have, so that she would suddenly have to give up all her music lessons, and take up some work, then we could do something lovely together, because she has such a splendid voice. We could hire a harp together and could travel to foreign cities and sing in front of the houses, and later we could give concerts and start

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

a singing-school, but all alone I can do nothing, nothing at all."

Her mother grew hot and cold from alarm at this outbreak, which no look or warning from her could keep back. Agnes's eyes were still burning like coals of fire with violent excitement.

"I am for the singing-school," said the Director then very earnestly, "but first of all let us sit down to breakfast. I hope the usual chocolate is here for the young people; it is a good birthday custom which should not be neglected. A singing-school ought to be formed," he continued, when all were seated and Mux in festive mood had noticed the three kinds of cakes surrounding the three huge chocolate-pots. "The wandering harpers are a little too poetic for my taste, but the singing-school, which pleases me, I will do something about; it shall be started in my district. There are a great many workmen over in the iron-works, who have children, small ones and still smaller, and the mothers have enough to do with the youngest of all and the

CORNELLI

housekeeping. If Agnes and Cornelli established a singing-school in Illerbach, all the children whose mothers have no time for singing, would come in. On their arrival the children would be furnished with a bowl of bread and milk to make their voices stronger. So then we should have the singing-school. Meanwhile I would have the teachers given the necessary instruction so that they would not get out of practice.

“ For Nika I have a vocation ready; she shall fill my house from top to bottom with paintings, and in order that she may always find new ideas, I am going to send her to study for a long while with her teacher. Dino shall help me keep my bays exercised. He must begin to ride now, which will do him and the horses both good. I can make extraordinarily good use of Mux; he shall be the manager of my estate. The good beginning he has made in the knowledge of farming with Mathis and Esther will continue as long as the earth is green and the trees bear fruit, and his mother is to stay with us to look after every-

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

thing. Now, are you pleased with the proposal? Shall we keep it so?"

Absolute silence followed. The children could not realize that it could actually be as his words had described. The mother was seized with such emotion that she could not utter one word, but she could not keep back the tears, which fell from her eyes. Could it be possible, could her heavy cares, her great trouble be so suddenly taken away; could she dare to believe it?

Then Mux said in a loud voice: "Yes, we shall!" for it was clear to him that continuing the good beginning meant that he should do as he had already been doing with Mathis and Esther. The Director laughed aloud.

"The principal voice is for me! Frau Halm, let us share, but I want the best part, which I will tell you about immediately. In Winter you shall have the children and manage as you like with all the studies. In Summer I will have them with me and enjoy the result of all the studies, and with the advantage that the mother

CORNELLI

will keep my house in order. Is that right, or is there too much in my share?"

Then the mother had recovered herself.

"Oh, Herr Hellmut, how can I thank you?" she said offering him her hand, which still trembled with emotion. "I do not know how to express what is in my heart, how to thank you for such unbelievable kindness. You cannot know what your great generosity means to all of us."

But then the children understood too that the whole incredible good fortune would be true. Nika with beaming eyes ran to the Director and seized his hand, but she could find no words to thank him. Agnes rushed after her. Dino had come before her. The Director did not know how to take all the hands at once. Mux, who found no other approach open to his benefactor, climbed up on his chair from behind, threw both arms around his neck and screamed many thousand words of thanks as close as possible to his ear. The shouts of gratitude became louder and louder.

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

“Cornelli,” then said her father, “carry your thanks to your foster-mother there. She really deserves all the gratitude. She has brought joy into our house.”

Cornelli did this with all her heart. She knew best what she had to thank the mother for. Then suddenly as if seized with the same thought Dino and Cornelli rushed away. They could not wait any longer to carry the good news to Martha. There was really no one in the whole world who could share with them their great joy as Martha could.

With what overflowing delight their old friend received the news. In the midst of abundantly flowing tears she kept saying over and over again:

“Oh, Cornelli, hasn’t the dear Lord made everything so much better than we knew how to ask Him for? We will always give up everything entirely into His hands. We will do that, Cornelli, all our life long, will we not?”

Cornelli nodded in full agreement with her.

CORNELLI

She had not in the least forgotten how she had complained to Martha and to whom she had directed her to go for help. If it had come about in a different way from what she had expected, still it had come about. And how much more wonderful than Cornelli had ever imagined it had happened!

Such shouts of joy as Agnes gave again and again as she stood with Nika in their room in the evening and Cornelli came in through the open door from hers to make her usual evening visit, had never sounded in the house before.

“No more troubles and secret bugbears!” she exclaimed jumping up and down in the room and dancing, like a bird escaped from a cage. “To go on singing and studying music longer and longer! To be here in your home with you, Cornelli! We are the most fortunate people in the whole world and you have brought it about, Cornelli! There’s nobody like you, Cornelli!”

Then Agnes seized her friend and danced and jumped with her so joyously around the room

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

that Nika had to remind her that Herr Hellmut might regret his invitation for a lasting visit, if it began with such a tumult. But she looked as if she would not be averse to jumping around with them for joy.

"It is true, Cornelli," she said. "The day you came to our house was the luckiest day in the whole year. We must celebrate it every year as the greatest festival in the house."

Nika had been so friendly and affectionate to Cornelli for a long time that she felt very happy about this, but Cornelli had not imagined that she would ever express herself so. It delighted her.

When the news of the families staying together and the annual return of the city people reached the kitchen, Esther said:

"Very good, it pleases me better than if some other people were coming back again. Better so for me and Cornelli and the whole house!"

"Oh, if only I could come back again with them another time!" said Trine, who always

CORNELLI

wore a smiling face now. "Oh, how good it is to be here!"

"It really is so," stated Esther, "and I don't know why not. You needn't be troubled, Trine. If Cornelli and I take somebody under our protection I don't know why she shouldn't come again!"

"Frau Halm, suppose we keep the children this year in the country until late in the Autumn," said the Director, who each day felt less willing to let his family go away again and for so long a time. "Dino, for whom instruction is most important, can least afford to go back. It is thoroughly necessary that he should first become strong and well. If necessary we always have our good Herr Malingер; if any need for studying should arise he can be brought here."

The mother was of the very same opinion and inexpressibly thankful that the Director should make this recovery possible for her boy.

"There is still another reason which makes it necessary to remain here longer," continued the

NEW LIFE IN ILLERBACH

Director. "I shall wish to visit you and the children now and then in the Winter. It would be somewhat difficult to climb frequently to your tower-like home. I have rented a more comfortable dwelling for the late Autumn and hope you are not displeased with me. So there will be much for you to do in consequence, and a real recuperation will be quite necessary for you."

"I can only thank you, thank you again and again," said Frau Halm, when all the children came running in and their shouts of joy prevented any further words. Cornelli had disclosed her father's plan that they should all remain in Illerbach until Winter.

When the fruit was ripe on all the trees and Dino shook one while Cornelli shook another, under which the children kept coming, eating an apple or a pear, then Mathis looked out from the barn-door and rubbed his hands with satisfaction.

"It is very different now from last year," he said, laughing. "There are no spoiled plums, no

CORNELLI

neglected pears to be found in the whole garden!"

Every evening when the last songs sounded from the windows in the Director's house, they were songs of praise and thanksgiving, rising to Heaven like loud shouts of joy. More than once, when the Director gave his little daughter her good-night kiss, he said with a smile:

"Isn't it true, Cornelli, the dear Lord meant well for us when it occurred to our old Martha to write such an alluring advertisement for the paper?"

THE END

The May Co.

34
68A-
502





